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FRIAR BACON AND FRIAR BUNGAY

G. B. HARRISON

Author of

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The Story of Elizabethan Drama
Shakespeare: The Man and his Stage
(with E. A. G. Lamborn)

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THE FORTUNE PLAY BOOKS

THE HONOURABLE HISTORY
OF FRIAR BACON AND
FRIAR BUNGAY

by
Robert Greene
Master of Arts

Prepared for reading by
G. B. HARRISON



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INTRODUCTION

ROBERT GREENE was the most popular writer of the group known in histories of literature as The University Wits. He was also the best known; for he made enemies who have recorded his vices and his pathetic end in some detail, while he wrote his own autobiography as he lay dying, in which he corroborates their accusations. He was a Norwich man, of lower middle-class family, who went up to St. John's College, Cambridge, as a poor scholar in 1575. His learning does not seem to have been very deep, and his manner of living may best be given in his own words:

"Being at the University of Cambridge, I light among wags as lewd as myself, with whom I consumed the flower of my youth, who drew me to travel into Italy and Spain, in which places I saw and practised such villainy as is abominable to declare. Thus by their counsel I sought to furnish myself with coin which I procured by cunning sleights from my father and my friends, and my mother pampered me so long and secretly helped me to the oil of angels that I grew hereby prone to all mischief; so that, being conversant with notable braggarts, boon companions and ordinary spendthrifts that practised sundry superficial studies, I became as a scion grafted into the same stock, whereby I did absolutely participate of their nature and qualities. At my return into England, I ruffled out in my silks in the habit of Malcontent and seemed so discontent that no place would please me to abide in nor no vocation cause me to stay myself in. But after I had by degrees proceeded Master of Arts, I left the University and away to London, where (after I had continued some short time and driven myself out of credit with sundry of my friends) I became an author of plays and a penner of love pamphlets, so that I soon grew famous in that quality, that who for that trade growne so ordinary about London as Robin Green."

Greene's first pamphlets were romances written in imitation of Lyly's style, and in spite of the cloying cleverness of the diction,

he turned out many a pretty story, more than one of which was afterwards dramatized by Shakespeare.

Greene wrote for the delight of ladies and gentlemen of good position, and had at first no intention of selling his wares to the despised stage, for the starving but still proud scholar not unnaturally hated the players who grew fat on the offspring of better brains. But when Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* and Marlowe's *Tamburlane* were produced, with great applause, in 1587 and 1588, it became clear that a new and profitable market was opened to the professional writer, and the voice of Greene's scholarly conscience, never very loud, was unheeded.

He began by imitating Marlowe in *Alphonsus of Arragon*, *Orlando Furioso*, and *The Looking-Glass for London*, a moral play in which he collaborated with Lodge. These first attempts were not very successful, and though the personality of Edward Alleyn, the great tragedian, carried off Orlando's ravings, Greene out-rants Marlowe so vigorously that one almost suspects a parody.

Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* was produced early in 1589, and there can be little doubt that *Friar Bacon* was an attempt to compete with it. But Greene was now on surer ground; if he had little aptitude for tragedy, he had the true feeling for comedy and considerable skill as a story-teller. He had, too, a far greater appreciation for stage craft than his rival, and, if he had lived, he might well have become amongst the greatest dramatists, for he had in addition a truer appreciation for style than most of his contemporaries. His *Conny Catching* pamphlets, written in 1591-2, are excellent examples of the beginnings of the plain style, for Greene was quite conscious (in his own words) "that a certain decorum is to be kept in everything," and that to apply an ornamental style to books describing the ways of professional rogues would be "to dishonour that high mystery of eloquence and derogate from the dignity of the English tongue." In *Friar Bacon* he very vigorously restrained the desire to be euphuistic, except in the letter which Lacy sends to Margaret (page 72), where indeed it is highly appropriate.

The verse in this play has all the usual faults of English blank verse of this period; it is, for the most part, stiff and over-seasoned with mythological allusion, especially in such a passage as the talk between Prince Edward, Lacy and Margaret in Scene VIII. But

when the characters can forget their classical education, they become distinct and individual. Margaret's wooers, Lambert and Serlsby, for instance, with their different ways of appealing to a maid, are sketched with firmness. But it would be unfair to compare the diction of this play with later comedies; even Shakespeare took six years before he achieved complete flexibility in his blank verse.

Greene has considerable skill in leading up to a good dramatic situation. Perhaps the best example in this play occurs in the scene (IX) where Vandermaſt, insolently boasting of his triumphs over Bungay, is suddenly confronted by Bacon and forebodes failure, even before Bacon has shown any proof of his greater power; the contrast between Bacon's curtness and Vandermaſt's desperate conjurations is excellent. As a whole, the plot of *Friar Bacon* is well-knit and the alternation between the charming idyll of Lacy and Margaret, the pageantry of the Court, the farce of Miles, and the deep studies of Bacon are skilfully combined. In fact, *The Honourable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is the best English comedy before Shakespeare.

It is only fair to add that the original text is exceedingly corrupt, and Greene is not to be blamed for all the mutilated lines or obscure phrases. The earliest quarto dates from 1594, and was probably set up from a stage version used by a travelling company.

Those who wish to study the play and its author more deeply are recommended to the late Sir Adolphus Ward's edition in one volume of *Dr. Faustus* and *Friar Bacon*, where the origins of Bacon's necromantic formulæ will be found; accounts of Greene's life will be found in J. Churton Collins's edition of *The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene*, and the present editor's *Shakespeare's Fellows*. Greene's poignant autobiography, *The Repentance of Robert Greene*, written as he was dying in the late summer of 1592, is reprinted in volume VI of *The Bodley Head Quartos*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT. Some of the stage directions from Scene XI have already appeared in an extract given in *The Story of Elizabethan Drama* (Cambridge University Press).

THE CHARACTERS

(in the order of their appearance)

EDWARD, PRINCE OF WALES
 LACY, EARL OF LINCOLN
 WARREN, EARL OF SUSSEX } his friends
 ERMSBY
 RALPH SIMNEL, the royal fool
 FRIAR ROGER BACON
 MILES, his poor scholar
 BURDEN
 MASON } doctors of the University of Oxford
 CLEMENT
 A WOMAN, the hostess of the Bell Inn at Henley
 MARGARET, daughter of the keeper of Fressingfield
 JOAN, her friend
 THOMAS } countrymen of Fressingfield
 RICHARD
 KING HENRY THE THIRD
 THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY
 THE KING OF CASTILE
 PRINCESS ELINOR, his daughter
 JAQUES VANDERMAST, a German magician
 FRIAR BUNGAY
 THE SPIRIT OF HERCULES
 A DEVIL
 THE CONSTABLE
 LAMBERT } Suffolk squires
 SERLSBY
 THE KEEPER OF FRESSINGFIELD
 THE POSTBOY
 TWO SCHOLARS
 THE KEEPER'S FRIEND

This play was first acted by the Queen's Players about 1589.

SCENE I

Edward, Prince of Wales, sits by himself, silent and depressed. His companions, Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, Warren, Earl of Sussex, and Ermsby, stand apart, conversing in low tones with Ralph Simmel the royal fool; they are unable to account for the Prince's sudden moodiness.

LACY

Why looks my lord like to a troubled sky
When heaven's bright shine is shadow'd with a fog?
Alate we ran the deer, and through the lawnds
Stripp'd with our nags the lofty frolic bucks
That scudded 'fore the teasers like the wind.
Ne'er was the deer of merry Fressingfield
So lustily pull'd down by jolly mates,
Nor shar'd the farmers such fat venison,
So frankly dealt, this hundred years before.
Nor have
I seen my lord more frolic in the chase,
And now chang'd to a melancholy dump.

WARREN

After the prince got to the Keeper's lodge,
And had been jocund in the house awhile,
Tossing off ale and milk in country cans,
Whether it was the country's sweet content,
Or else the bonny damsel fill'd us drink
That seem'd so stately in her stammel red,
Or that a qualm did cross his stomach then,
But straight he fell into his passions.

ERMSBY

Sirrah Ralph, what say you to your master,
Shall he thus all amort live malcontent?

RALPH [*stepping behind the Prince*]

Hearest thou, Ned? [*To the others.*] Nay, look if he will speak to me!

PRINCE EDWARD [*without turning his head*]

What say'st thou to me, fool?

RALPH

I prithee, tell me, Ned, art thou in love with the Keeper's daughter?

PRINCE EDWARD

How if I be, what then?

RALPH

Why, then, sirrah, I'll teach thee how to deceive Love.

PRINCE EDWARD

How, Ralph?

RALPH

Marry, Sirrah Ned, thou shalt put on my cap and my coat and my dagger, and I will put on thy clothes and thy sword; and so thou shalt be my fool.

PRINCE EDWARD

And what of this?

RALPH

Why, so thou shalt beguile Love; for Love is such a proud scab, that he will never meddle with fools nor children. Is not Ralph's counsel good, Ned?

PRINCE EDWARD [*rousing himself*]

Tell me, Ned Lacy, didst thou mark the maid,
How lovely in her country-weeds she look'd?
A bonnier wench all Suffolk cannot yield—
All Suffolk! nay, all England holds none such.

RALPH

Sirrah Will Ermsby, Ned is deceived.

ERMSBY

Why, Ralph?

RALPH

He says all England hath no such, and I say, and I'll stand to it, there is one better in Warwickshire.

WARREN

How provest thou that, Ralph?

RALPH

Why, is not the abbot a learned man, and hath read many books, and thinkest thou he hath not more learning than thou to choose a bonny wench? Yes, warrant I thee, by his whole grammar.

ERMSBY

A good reason, Ralph.

PRINCE EDWARD [*with growing enthusiasm*]

I tell thee, Lacy, that her sparkling eyes
Do lighten forth sweet love's alluring fire;
And in her tresses she doth fold the looks
Of such as gaze upon her golden hair.
Her bashful white, mix'd with the morning's red,
Luna doth boast upon her lovely cheeks;
Her front is beauty's table, where she paints
The glories of her gorgeous excellence.
Her teeth are shelves of precious margarites,
Richly enclos'd with ruddy coral cleeves.
Tush, Lacy, she is beauty's overmatch,
If thou survey'st her curious imagery.

LACY

I grant, my lord, the damsel is as fair
As simple Suffolk's homely towns can yield.
But in the court be quainter dames than she,
Whose faces are enrich'd with honour's taint,
Whose beauties stand upon the stage of fame,
And vaunt their trophies in the courts of love.

PRINCE EDWARD

Ah, Ned, but hadst thou watch'd her as myself,
And seen the secret beauties of the maid,
Their courtly coyness were but foolery.

ERMSBY

Why, how watch'd you her, my lord?

PRINCE EDWARD

Whenas she swept like Venus through the house,
And in her shape fast folded up my thoughts,
Into the milk-house went I with the maid,
And there amongst the cream-bowls she did shine
As Pallas 'mongst her princely huswifery.
She turn'd her smock over her lily arms,
And div'd them into milk to run her cheese;
But whiter than the milk her crystal skin,
Check'd with lines of azure, made her blush
That art or nature durst bring for compare.
Ermsby, if thou hadst seen, as I did, note it well,
How beauty play'd the huswife, how this girl,
Like Lucrece, laid her fingers to the work,
Thou wouldst, with Tarquin, hazard Rome and all
To win the lovely maid of Fressingfield.

RALPH

Sirrah, Ned, wouldst fain have her?

PRINCE EDWARD

Ay, Ralph.

RALPH [*with an air of great wisdom*]

Why, Ned, I have laid the plot in my head; thou shalt have
her already.

PRINCE EDWARD

I'll give thee a new coat, an learn me that.

RALPH

Why, Sirrah Ned, we'll ride to Oxford to Friar Bacon! Oh,

he is a brave scholar, sirrah; they say he is a brave necromancer, that he can make women of devils, and he can juggle cats into costermongers.

PRINCE EDWARD

And how then, Ralph?

RALPH

Marry, sirrah, thou shalt go to him, and because thy father Harry shall not miss thee, he shall turn me into thee; and I'll to the court, and I'll prince it out; and he shall make thee either a silken purse full of gold, or else a fine wrought smock.

PRINCE EDWARD

But how shall I have the maid?

RALPH

Marry, sirrah, if thou be'st a silken purse full of gold, then on Sundays she'll hang thee by her side, and you must not say a word. Now, sir, when she comes into a great prease of people, for fear of the cutpurse, on a sudden she'll swap thee into her plackerd; then, sirrah, being there, you may plead for yourself.

ERMSBY

Excellent policy!

PRINCE EDWARD

But how if I be a wrought smock?

RALPH

Then she'll put thee into her chest and lay thee into lavender, and upon some good day she'll put thee on; and at night when you go to bed, then being turned from a smock to a man, you may make up the match.

LACY

Wonderfully wisely counselled, Ralph.

PRINCE EDWARD

Ralph shall have a new coat.

RALPH

God thank you when I have it on my back, Ned.

PRINCE EDWARD

Lacy, the fool hath laid a perfect plot;
For why our country Margaret is so coy,
And stands so much upon her honest points,
That marriage or no market with the maid.
Ermsby, it must be necromantic spells
And charms of art that must enchain her love,
Or else shall Edward never win the girl.
Therefore, my wags, we'll horse us in the morn,
And post to Oxford to this jolly friar—
Bacon shall by his magic do this deed.

WARREN

Content, my lord; and that's a speedy way
To wean these headstrong puppies from the teat.

PRINCE EDWARD

I am unknown, not taken for the prince;
They only deem us frolic courtiers,
That revel thus among our liege's game—
Therefore I have devis'd a policy.
Lacy, thou know'st next Friday is Saint James',
And then the country flocks to Harleston fair;
Then will the Keeper's daughter frolic there,
And over-shine the troop of all the maids
That come to see and to be seen that day.
Haunt thee disguis'd among the country-swains,
Feign thou 'rt a farmer's son, not far from thence,
Espy her loves, and who she liketh best;
Cote him, and court her to control the clown;
Say that the courtier 'tired all in green,
That help'd her handsomely to run her cheese,
And fill'd her father's lodge with venison,

Commends him, and sends fairings to herself.
Buy something worthy of her parentage,
Not worth her beauty; for, Lacy, then the fair
Affords no jewel fitting for the maid.
And when thou talk'st of me, note if she blush—
O, then she loves; but if her cheeks wax pale,
Disdain it is. Lacy, send how she fares,
And spare no time nor cost to win her loves.

LACY

I will, my lord, so execute this charge
As if that Lacy were in love with her.

PRINCE EDWARD

Send letters speedily to Oxford of the news.

RALPH

And, Sirrah Lacy, buy me a thousand thousand million of
fine bells.

LACY

What wilt thou do with them, Ralph?

RALPH

Marry, every time that Ned sighs for the Keeper's daughter,
I'll tie a bell about him: and so within three or four days I
will send word to his father Harry, that his son, and my
master Ned, is become Love's morris-dancer.

PRINCE EDWARD

Well, Lacy, look with care unto thy charge,
And I will haste to Oxford to the friar,
That he by art, and thou by secret gifts,
Mayst make me lord of merry Fressingfield.

LACY

God send your honour your heart's desire.

SCENE II

In his study at Brazenose College, Oxford, Friar Bacon receives a deputation of three learned doctors of the University—Burden, Mason and Clement—who have come to inquire into Bacon's studies. Miles, his servant, follows them, carrying the Friar's books of necromancy under his arm; he is a simple youth, who regards his master's experiments with respectful amusement. The doctors sit down with Bacon.

BACON

Miles, where are you?

MILES

Hic sum, doctissime et reverendissime doctor.

BACON

Attulisti nos libros meos de necromantia?

MILES [*intoning*]

Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare libros in unum!

BACON

Now, masters of our academic state
That rule in Oxford, viceroys in your place,
Whose heads contain maps of the liberal arts,
Spending your time in depth of learnèd skill,
Why flock you thus to Bacon's secret cell,
A friar newly stall'd in Brazen-nose?
Say what's your mind, that I may make reply.

BURDEN

Bacon, we hear that long we have suspect,
That thou art read in magic's mystery;
In pyromancy, to divine by flames;
To tell, by hydromatic, ebbs and tides;
By aeromancy to discover doubts,
To plain out questions, as Apollo did.

BACON

Well, Master Burden, what of all this?

MILES

Marry, sir, he doth but fulfil, by rehearsing of these names, the fable of the Fox and the Grapes; that which is above us pertains nothing to us.

BURDEN

I tell thee, Bacon, Oxford makes report,
Nay, England, and the court of Henry says,
Thou'rt making of a brazen head by art,
Which shall unfold strange doubts and aphorisms,
And read a lecture in philosophy;
And, by the help of devils and ghastly fiends,
Thou mean'st, ere many years or days be past,
To compass England with a wall of brass.

BACON [*cautiously*]

And what of this?

MILES

What of this, master! Why, he doth speak mystically; for he knows, if your skill fail to make a brazen head, yet Mother Waters' strong ale will fit his turn to make him have a copper nose.

CLEMENT

Bacon, we come not grieving at thy skill,
But joying that our academy yields
A man suppos'd the wonder of the world.
For if thy cunning work these miracles,
England and Europe shall admire thy fame,
And Oxford shall in characters of brass,
And statues, such as were built up in Rome,
Eternise Friar Bacon for his art.

MASON

Then, gentle friar, tell us thy intent.

BACON

Seeing you come as friends unto the friar,
Resolve you, doctors, Bacon can by books
Make storming Boreas thunder from his cave,
And dim fair Luna to a dark eclipse.
The great arch-ruler, potentate of hell,
Trembles when Bacon bids him, or his fiends,
Bow to the force of his pentageron.
What art can work, the frolic friar knows;
And therefore will I turn my magic books,
And strain out necromancy to the deep.
I have contriv'd and fram'd a head of brass
(I made Belcephon hammer out the stuff),
And that by art shall read philosophy.
And I will strengthen England by my skill,
That if ten Cæsars liv'd and reign'd in Rome,
With all the legions Europe doth contain,
They should not touch a grass of English ground.
The work that Ninus rear'd at Babylon,
The brazen walls fram'd by Semiramis,
Carv'd out like to the portal of the sun,
Shall not be such as rings the English strand
From Dover to the market-place of Rye.

BURDEN

Is this possible?

MILES

I'll bring ye two or three witnesses.

BURDEN

What be those?

MILES

Marry, sir, three or four as honest devils and good companions
as any be in hell.

MASON

No doubt but magic may do much in this;

For he that reads but mathematic rules
Shall find conclusions that avail to work
Wonders that pass the common sense of men.

BURDEN [*with a sneer*]

But Bacon roves a bow beyond his reach,
And tells of more than magic can perform,
Thinking to get a fame by fooleries.
Have I not pass'd as far in state of schools,
And read of many secrets? Yet to think
That heads of brass can utter any voice,
Or more, to tell of deep philosophy,
This is a fable Æsop had forgot.

BACON

Burden, thou wrong'st me in detracting thus;
Bacon loves not to stuff himself with lies.
But tell me 'fore these doctors, if thou dare,
Of certain questions I shall move to thee.

BURDEN

I will: ask what thou can.

MILES

Marry, sir, he'll straight be on your pick-back, to know
whether the feminine or the masculine gender be most
worthy.

BACON

Were you not yesterday, Master Burden, at Henley upon the
Thames?

BURDEN [*taken aback*]

I was: what then?

BACON

What book studied you thereon all night?

BURDEN [*flushing*]

I! None at all; I read not there a line.

BACON

Then, doctors, Friar Bacon's art knows naught.

CLEMENT

What say you to this, Master Burden? Doth he not touch you?

BURDEN

I pass not of his frivolous speeches.

MILES

Nay, Master Burden, my master, ere he hath done with you, will turn you from a doctor to a dunce, and shake you so small that he will leave no more learning in you than is in Balaam's ass.

BACON [*ironically*]

Masters, for that learn'd Burden's skill is deep,
And sore he doubts of Bacon's cabalism,
I'll show you why he haunts to Henley oft.
Not, doctors, for to taste the fragrant air,
But there to spend the night in alchemy,
To multiply with secret spells of art—
Thus private steals he learning from us all.
To prove my sayings true, I'll show you straight
The book he keeps at Henley for himself.

MILES

Nay, now my master goes to conjuration, take heed.

BACON

Masters,
Stand still, fear not, I'll show you but his book.
[*Making some passes with his hands.*] *Per omnes deos infernales,*
Belcephon!

A devil appears carrying a woman (with a shoulder of mutton in her hand, smoking from the spit) whom he sets down in their midst.

MILES

Oh, master, cease your conjuration, or you spoil all; for here 's
a she-devil come with a shoulder of mutton on a spit. You
have marred the devil's supper; but no doubt he thinks our
college fare is slender, and so hath sent you his cook with a
shoulder of mutton, to make it exceed.

WOMAN [*in terror*]

O, where am I, or what's become of me?

BACON

What art thou?

WOMAN

Hostess at Henley, mistress of the Bell.

BACON

How cam'st thou here?

WOMAN

As I was in the kitchen 'mongst the maids,
Spitting the meat 'gainst supper for my guests,
A motion mov'd me to look forth of door.
No sooner had I pried into the yard,
But straight a whirlwind hoisted me from thence,
And mounted me aloft unto the clouds.
As in a trance I thought nor fearèd naught,
Nor know I where or whither I was ta'en,
Nor where I am nor what these persons be.

BACON

No? Know you not Master Burden?

WOMAN

O, yes, good sir, he is my daily guest.
[*Seeing Burden.*] What, Master Burden! 'twas but yesternight
That you and I at Henley play'd at cards.

BURDEN

I know not what we did. A pox of all conjuring friars!

CLEMENT

Now, jolly friar, tell us, is this the book
That Burden is so careful to look on?

BACON

It is. [*Triumphantly.*] But, Burden, tell me now,
Think'st thou that Bacon's necromantic skill
Cannot perform his head and wall of brass,
When he can fetch thine hostess in such post?

MILES

I'll warrant you, master, if Master Burden could conjure as
well as you, he would have his book every night from Henley
to study on at Oxford.

MASON

Burden,
What, are you mated by this frolic friar?
Look how he droops; his guilty conscience
Drives him to 'bash, and makes his hostess blush.

BACON

Well, mistress, for I will not have you miss'd,
You shall to Henley to cheer up your guests
'Fore supper gin. Burden, bid her adieu;
Say farewell to your hostess 'fore she goes.
[*To his devil.*] Sirrah, away, and set her safe at home.

WOMAN

Master Burden, when shall we see you at Henley?

BURDEN [*angrily*]

The devil take thee and Henley too.

The devil vanishes with the woman.

MILES

Master, shall I make a good motion?

BACON

What 's that?

MILES

Marry, sir, now that my hostess is gone to provide supper,
conjure up another spirit, and send Doctor Burden flying after.

BACON

Thus, rulers of our academic state,
You have seen the friar frame his art by proof;
And as the college callèd Brazen-nose
Is under him, and he the master there,
So surely shall this head of brass be fram'd,
And yield forth strange and uncouth aphorisms;
And hell and Hecate shall fail the friar,
But I will circle England round with brass.

MILES

So be it *et nunc et semper*; amen.

SCENE III

*Freshingfield Fair; Margaret and Joan come in with
Thomas, Richard and other countrymen, all very gay.
Amongst them is Lacy, disguised as a farmer.*

THOMAS

By my troth, Margaret, here's a weather is able to make a man
call his father "whoreson." If this weather hold, we shall
have hay good cheap, and butter and cheese at Harleston will
bear no price.

MARGARET

Thomas, maids when they come to see the fair
Count not to make a cope for dearth of hay.
When we have turn'd our butter to the salt,
And set our cheese safely upon the racks,
Then let our fathers prize it as they please.
We country sluts of merry Fressingfield
Come to buy needless naughts, to make us fine,
And look that young men should be frank this day,
And court us with such fairings as they can.

Phœbus is blithe, and frolic looks from heaven,
As when he courted lovely Semele,
Swearing the pedlars shall have empty packs,
If that fair weather may make chapmen buy.

LACY [*making up to Margaret*]

But, lovely Peggy, Semele is dead,
And therefore Phœbus from his palace pries,
And, seeing such a sweet and seemly saint,
Shows all his glories for to court yourself.

MARGARET

This is a fairing, gentle sir, indeed,
Too soothe me up with such smooth flattery.
But learn of me, your scoff's too broad before.
Well, Joan, our beauties must abide their jests;
We serve the turn in jolly Fressingfield.

JOAN [*whispering excitedly*]

Margaret, a farmer's daughter for a farmer's son!
I warrant you, the meanest of us both
Shall have a mate to lead us from the church.
[*To Thomas, as Lacy takes Margaret aside and talks to her softly.*]
But, Thomas, what's the news? What, in a dump?
Give me your hand, we are near a pedlar's shop;
Out with your purse, we must have fairings now.

THOMAS

Faith, Joan, and shall. I'll bestow a fairing on you, and then
we will to the tavern, and snap off a pint of wine or two.

MARGARET

Whence are you, sir? Of Suffolk? For your terms
Are finer than the common sort of men.

LACY

Faith, lovely girl, I am of Beccles by,
Your neighbour, not above six miles from hence,

A farmer's son, that never was so quaint
But that he could do courtesy to such dames.
But trust me, Margaret, I am sent in charge
From him that revell'd in your father's house,
And fill'd his lodge with cheer and venison,
'Tired in green. He sent you this rich purse,
His token that he help'd you run your cheese,
And in the milkhouse chatted with yourself.

MARGARET [*in amazement*]
To me?

LACY
You forget yourself:
Women are often weak in memory.

MARGARET
O, pardon, sir, I call to mind the man.
'Twere little manners to refuse his gift,
And yet I hope he sends it not for love;
For we have little leisure to debate of that.

JOAN
What, Margaret! blush not; maids must have their loves.

THOMAS
Nay, by the mass, she looks pale as if she were angry.

RICHARD [*to Lacy*]
Sirrah, are you of Beccles? I pray, how doth Goodman Cob?
My father bought a horse of him. I'll tell you, Margaret, 'a
were good to be a gentleman's jade, for of all things the foul
hilding could not abide a dung-cart.

MARGARET [*to herself*]
How different is this farmer from the rest
That erst as yet have pleas'd my wandering sight!
His words are witty, quicken'd with a smile,
His courtesy gentle, smelling of the court;

Facile and debonair in all his deeds;
Proportion'd as was Paris, when, in grey,
He courted CEnon in the vale by Troy.
Great lords have come and pleaded for my love:
Who but the Keeper's lass of Fressingfield?
And yet methinks this farmer's jolly son
Passeth the proudest that hath pleas'd mine eye.
But, Peg, disclose not that thou art in love,
And show as yet no sign of love to him,
Although thou well wouldst wish him for thy love—
Keep that to thee till time doth serve thy turn,
To show the grief wherein thy heart doth burn.
[*To the others.*] Come, Joan and Thomas, shall we to the fair?
You, Beccles man, will not forsake us now?

LACY

Not whilst I may have such quaint girls as you.

MARGARET

Well, if you chance to come by Fressingfield,
Make but a step into the Keeper's lodge,
And such poor fare as woodmen can afford,
Butter and cheese, cream and fat venison,
You shall have store, and welcome therewithal.

LACY

Gramercies, Peggy; look for me ere long.

SCENE IV

*King Henry the Third enters with the Emperor, the
King of Castile, Princess Elinor, and Dr. Jaques
Vandermaſt, a German magician.*

KING HENRY

Great men of Europe, monarchs of the west,
Ring'd with the walls of old Oceanus,
Whose lofty surge is like the battlements

That compass'd high-built Babel in with towers,
Welcome, my lords, welcome, brave western kings,
To England's shore, whose promontory-cleaves
Show Albion is another little world.
Welcome says English Henry to you all;
Chiefly unto the lovely Elinor,
Who dar'd for Edward's sake cut through the seas,
And venture as Agenor's damsel through the deep,
To get the love of Henry's wanton son.

KING OF CASTILE

England's rich monarch, brave Plantagenet,
The Pyren Mounts, swelling above the clouds,
That ward the wealthy Castile in with walls,
Could not detain the beauteous Elinor.
But hearing of the fame of Edward's youth,
She dar'd to brook Neptunus' haughty pride,
And bide the brunt of froward Æolus:
Then may fair England welcome her the more.

ELINOR

After that English Henry by his lords
Had sent Prince Edward's lovely counterfeit,
A present to the Castile Elinor,
The comely portrait of so brave a man,
The virtuous fame discoursèd of his deeds,
Edward's courageous resolution,
Done at the Holy Land 'fore Damas' walls,
Led both mine eye and thoughts in equal links,
To like so of the English monarch's son,
That I attempted perils for his sake.

EMPEROR

Where is the prince, my lord?

KING HENRY

He posted down, not long since, from the court,
To Suffolk side, to merry Framlingham,
To sport himself amongst my fallow deer.

From thence, by packets sent to Hampton-house,
We hear the prince is ridden, with his lords,
To Oxford, in the académy there
To hear dispute amongst the learnèd men.
But we will send forth letters for my son,
To will him come from Oxford to the court.

EMPEROR

Nay, rather, Henry, let us, as we be,
Ride for to visit Oxford with our train.
Fain would I see your universities,
And what learn'd men your académy yields.
From Hapsburg have I brought a learnèd clerk
To hold dispute with English orators—
This doctor, surnam'd Jaques Vandermaſt,
A German born, pass'd into Padua,
To Florence and to fair Bologna,
To Paris, Rheims, and stately Orleans,
And, talking there with men of art, put down
The chiefeſt of them all in aphorisms,
In magic, and the mathematic rules:
Now let us, Henry, try him in your schools.

KING HENRY

He shall, my lord; this motion likes me well.
We'll progress ſtraight to Oxford with our trains,
And ſee what men our académy brings.
And, wonder Vandermaſt, welcome to me;
In Oxford ſhalt thou find a jolly friar,
Call'd Friar Bacon, England's only flower.
Set him but nonplus in his magic ſpells,
And make him yield in mathematic rules,
And for thy glory I will bind thy brows,
Not with a poet's garland made of bays,
But with a coronet of choiceſt gold.
Whilſt then we ſet to Oxford with our troops,
Let 's in and banquet in our English court.

SCENE V

At Oxford, Ralph Simnel, the fool, in the Prince's clothes, lords it over Prince Edward, Warren and Ermsby, who are disguised as his servants.

RALPH [*haughtily*]

Where be these vagabond knaves, that they attend no better on their master?

PRINCE EDWARD

If it please your honour, we are all ready at an inch.

RALPH

Sirrah Ned, I'll have no more post-horse to ride on: I'll have another fetch.

ERMSBY

I pray you, how is that, my lord?

RALPH

Marry, sir, I'll send to the Isle of Ely for four or five dozen of geese, and I'll have them tied six and six together with whip-cord. Now upon their backs will I have a fair field-bed with a canopy; and so, when it is my pleasure, I'll flee into what place I please. This will be easy.

WARREN [*with mock respect*]

Your honour hath said well; but shall we to Brazen-nose College before we pull off our boots?

ERMSBY

Warren, well motion'd; we will to the friar

Before we revel it within the town.

Ralph, see you keep your countenance like a prince.

RALPH

Wherefore have I such a company of cutting knaves to wait upon me, but to keep and defend my countenance against all mine enemies? Have you not good swords and bucklers?

ERMSBY

Stay, who comes here?

WARREN

Some scholar; and we'll ask him where Friar Bacon is.

Friar Bacon and Miles approach.

BACON [*testily*]

Why, thou arrant dunce, shall I never make thee a good scholar? Doth not all the town cry out and say, Friar Bacon's subsizer is the greatest blockhead in all Oxford? Why, thou canst not speak one word of true Latin.

MILES

No, sir? Yet, what is this else? *Ego sum tuus homo*, "I am your man": I warrant you, sir, as good Tully's phrase as any is in Oxford.

BACON

Come on, sirrah; what part of speech is *Ego*?

MILES

Ego, that is "I"; marry, *nomen substantivo*.

BACON

How prove you that?

MILES

Why, sir, let him prove himself an 'a will; I can be heard, felt, and understood.

BACON [*cuffing him*]

Oh gross dunce!

PRINCE EDWARD

Come, let us break off this dispute between these two. [*Accosting Miles.*] Sirrah, where is Brazen-nose College?

MILES

Not far from Coppersmith's Hall.

PRINCE EDWARD

What, dost thou mock me?

MILES

Not I, sir: but what would you at Brazen-nose?

ERMSBY

Marry, we would speak with Friar Bacon.

MILES

Whose men be you?

ERMSBY [*indicating the fool*]

Marry, scholar, here 's our master.

RALPH

Sirrah, I am the master of these good fellows; mayst thou not know me to be a lord by my reparable?

MILES

Then here 's good game for the hawk; for here 's the master-fool and a covey of coxcombs—one wise man, I think, would spring you all.

PRINCE EDWARD [*his hand on his belt*]

Gog's wounds! Warren, kill him.

WARREN [*tugging at his poniard*]

Why, Ned, I think the devil be in my sheath; I cannot get out my dagger.

ERMSBY

Nor I mine! 'Swones, Ned, I think I am bewitched.

MILES

A company of scabs! The proudest of you all draw your weapon, if he can. See how boldly I speak, now my master is by.

PRINCE EDWARD

I strive in vain; but if my sword be shut
And conjur'd fast by magic in my sheath,
[*Boxing Miles's ears*] Villain, here is my fist.

MILES

Oh, I beseech you conjure his hands too, that he may not
lift his arms to his head, for he is light-fingered!

RALPH

Ned, strike him; I'll warrant thee by mine honour.

BACON

What means the English prince to wrong my man?

PRINCE EDWARD

To whom speak'st thou?

BACON

To thee.

PRINCE EDWARD [*amazed*]

Who art thou?

BACON

Could you not judge when all your swords grew fast,
That Friar Bacon was not far from hence?
Edward, King Henry's son and Prince of Wales,
Thy fool disguis'd cannot conceal thyself.
I know both Ermsby and the Sussex Earl,
Else Friar Bacon had but little skill.
Thou com'st in post from merry Fressingfield,
Fast-fancied to the Keeper's bonny lass,
To crave some succour of the jolly friar.
And Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, hast thou left
To treat fair Margaret to allow thy loves;
But friends are men, and love can baffle lords;
The earl both woos and courts her for himself.

WARREN

Ned, this is strange; the friar knoweth all.

ERMSBY

Apollo could not utter more than this.

PRINCE EDWARD

I stand amaz'd to hear this jolly friar
Tell even the very secrets of my thoughts.
But, learnèd Bacon, since thou know'st the cause
Why I did post so fast from Fressingfield,
Help, friar, at a pinch, that I may have
The love of lovely Margaret to myself,
And, as I am true Prince of Wales, I'll give
Living and lands to strength thy college-state.

WARREN

Good friar, help the prince in this.

RALPH

Why, servant Ned, will not the friar do it? [*Heroically.*] Were
not my sword glued to my scabbard by conjuration, I would
cut off his head, and make him do it by force.

MILES

In faith, my lord, your manhood and your sword is all alike;
they are so fast conjured that we shall never see them.

ERMSBY

What, doctor, in a dump! Tush, help the prince,
And thou shalt see how liberal he will prove.

BACON [*rousing himself from his contemplations*]

Crave not such actions greater dumps than these?
I will, my lord, strain out my magic spells;
For this day comes the earl to Fressingfield,
And 'fore that night shuts in the day with dark,
They'll be betrothèd each to other fast.
But come with me; we'll to my study straight,

And in a glass prospective I will show
What 's done this day in merry Fressingfield.

PRINCE EDWARD

Gramercies, Bacon; I will quite thy pain.

BACON

But send your train, my lord, into the town,
My scholar shall go bring them to their inn.
Meanwhile we'll see the knavery of the earl.

PRINCE EDWARD

Warren, leave me; and, Ermsby, take the fool;
Let him be master, and go revel it,
Till I and Friar Bacon talk awhile.

WARREN

We will, my lord.

RALPH

Faith, Ned, and I'll lord it out till thou comest; I'll be
Prince of Wales over all the black-pots in Oxford.

*The fool, Warren, Ermsby and Miles go out, while
the Prince accompanies Friar Bacon.*

SCENE VI

*Friar Bacon enters his study with Prince Edward.
He leads him up to the magic mirror.*

BACON

Now, frolic Edward, welcome to my cell;
Here tempers Friar Bacon many toys,
And holds this place his consistory-court,
Wherein the devils plead homage to his words.
Within this glass prospective thou shalt see
This day what 's done in merry Fressingfield
'Twixt lovely Peggy and the Lincoln Earl.

PRINCE EDWARD

Friar, thou glad'st me: now shall Edward try
How Lacy meaneth to his sovereign Lord.

BACON

Stand there and look directly in the glass.

*As the Prince gazes into the glass, he sees the figures
of Margaret and Friar Bungay, in earnest conver-*
sation.

What sees my lord?

PRINCE EDWARD

I see the Keeper's lovely lass appear,
As brightsome as the paramour of Mars,
Only attended by a jolly friar.

BACON

Sit still, and keep the crystal in your eye.
The figures begin to speak.

MARGARET

But tell me, Friar Bungay, is it true
That this fair courteous country swain,
Who says his father is a farmer nigh,
Can be Lord Lacy, Earl of Lincolnshire?

BUNGAY

Peggy, 'tis true, 'tis Lacy for my life,
Or else mine art and cunning both do fail,
Left by Prince Edward to procure his loves;
For he in green, that help you run your cheese,
Is son to Henry and the Prince of Wales.

MARGARET

Be what he will, his lure is but for lust.
But did Lord Lacy like poor Margaret,
Or would he deign to wed a country lass,
Friar, I would his humble handmaid be,
And for great wealth quite him with courtesy.

BUNGAY

Why, Margaret, dost thou love him?

MARGARET

His personage, like the pride of vaunting Troy,
Might well avouch to shadow Helen's rape.
His wit is quick and ready in conceit,
As Greece afforded in her chiefeſt prime.
Courteous, ah friar, full of pleasing smiles!
Trust me, I love too much to tell thee more;
Suffice to me he 's England's paramour.

BUNGAY

Hath not each eye that view'd thy pleasing face
Surnamed thee Fair Maid of Fressingfield?

MARGARET

Yes, Bungay; and would God the lovely earl
Had that in *esse* that so many sought.

BUNGAY

Fear not, the friar will not be behind
To show his cunning to entangle love.

PRINCE EDWARD

I think the friar courts the bonny wench—
Bacon, methinks he is a lusty churl.

BACON

Now look, my lord.
The figure of Lacy appears in the glass.

PRINCE EDWARD

Gog's wounds, Bacon, here comes Lacy!

BACON

Sit still, my lord, and mark the comedy.

BUNGAY

Here's Lacy, Margaret; step aside awhile.
He draws Margaret to one side.

LACY [*musings*]

Daphne, the damsel that caught Phœbus fast,
And lock'd him in the brightness of her looks,
Was not so beauteous in Apollo's eyes
As is fair Margaret to the Lincoln Earl.
Recant thee, Lacy, thou art put in trust:
Edward, thy sovereign's son, hath chosen thee,
A secret friend, to court her for himself,
And dar'st thou wrong thy prince with treachery?
Lacy, love makes no exception of a friend,
Nor deems it of a prince but as a man.
Honour bids thee control him in his lust;
His wooing is not for to wed the girl,
But to entrap her and beguile the lass.
Lacy, thou lov'st, then brook not such abuse,
But wed her, and abide thy prince's frown—
For better die than see her live disgrac'd.

MARGARET

Come, friar, I will shake him from his dumps.
[*Coming forward.*] How cheer you, sir? A penny for your
thought.
You're early up, pray God it be the near.
What, come from Beccles in a morn so soon?

LACY

Thus watchful are such men as live in love,
Whose eyes brook broken slumbers for their sleep.
I tell thee, Peggy, since last Harleston fair
My mind hath felt a heap of passions.

MARGARET

A trusty man, that court it for your friend;
Woo you still for the courtier all in green?
I marvel that he sues not for himself.

LACY

Peggy,
I pleaded first to get your grace for him;
But when mine eyes survey'd your beauteous looks,
Love, like a wag, straight div'd into my heart,
And there did shrine the idea of yourself.
Pity me, though I be a farmer's son,
And measure not my riches, but my love.

MARGARET

You are very hasty; for to garden well,
Seeds must have time to sprout before they spring.
Love ought to creep as doth the dial's shade,
For timely ripe is rotten too-too soon.

BUNGAY [*joining them*]

Deus hic; room for a merry friar!
What, youth of Beccles, with the Keeper's lass?
'Tis well; but tell me, hear you any news?

LACY

No, friar: what news?

BUNGAY

Hear you not how the pursuivants do post
With proclamations through each country-town?

LACY

For what, gentle friar? Tell the news.

BUNGAY [*mischievously*]

Dwell'st thou in Beccles, and hear'st not of these news?
Lacy, the Earl of Lincoln, is late fled
From Windsor court, disguisèd like a swain,
And lurks about the country here unknown.
Henry suspects him of some treachery,
And therefore doth proclaim in every way
That who can take the Lincoln Earl shall have,
Paid in the Exchequer, twenty thousand crowns.

LACY

The Earl of Lincoln! Friar, thou art mad.
It was some other; thou mistak'st the man.
The Earl of Lincoln! Why, it cannot be.

MARGARET [*laughing at his alarm*]

Yes, very well, my lord, for you are he—
The Keeper's daughter took you prisoner.
Lord Lacy, yield, I'll be your gaoler once.

PRINCE EDWARD

How familiar they be, Bacon!

BACON

Sit still, and mark the sequel of their loves.

LACY

Then am I double prisoner to thyself.
Peggy, I yield. But are these news in jest?

MARGARET

In jest with you, but earnest unto me;
For why these wrongs do wring me at the heart.
Ah, how these earls and noblemen of birth
Flatter and feign to forge poor women's ill!

LACY

Believe me, lass, I am the Lincoln Earl.
I not deny but, 'tirèd thus in rags,
I liv'd disguis'd to win fair Peggy's love.

MARGARET

What love is there where wedding ends not love?

LACY

I mean, fair girl, to make thee Lacy's wife.

MARGARET

I little think that earls will stoop so low.

LACY

Say shall I make thee countess ere I sleep?

MARGARET

Handmaid unto the earl, so please himself:

A wife in name, but servant in obedience.

LACY

The Lincoln Countess, for it shall be so;

I'll plight the bands, and seal it with a kiss.

He takes her in his arms.

PRINCE EDWARD [*bending forward*]

Gog's wounds, Bacon, they kiss! I'll stab them.

BACON [*restraining him*]

O, hold your hands, my lord, it is the glass!

PRINCE EDWARD

Choler to see the traitors gree so well

Made me to think the shadows substances.

BACON

'Twere a long poniard, my lord, to reach between Oxford and
Fressingfield; but sit still and see more.

BUNGAY

Well, Lord of Lincoln, if your loves be knit,
And that your tongues and thoughts do both agree,

To avoid ensuing jars, I'll hamper up the match.

I'll take my portage forth and wed you here;

Then go to bed and seal up your desires.

LACY

Friar, content. Peggy, how like you this?

MARGARET

What likes my lord is pleasing unto me.

BUNGAY

Then hand-fast hand, and I will to my book.

They join hands.

BACON

What sees my lord now?

PRINCE EDWARD [*very agitated*]

Bacon, I see the lovers hand in hand,
The friar ready with his portace there
To wed them both: then am I quite undone.
Bacon, help now, if e'er thy magic serv'd;
Help, Bacon; stop the marriage now,
If devils or necromancy may suffice,
And I will give thee forty thousand crowns.

BACON

Fear not, my lord, I'll stop the jolly friar
For mumbling up his orisons this day.

*The lovers wait anxiously for Bungay to begin, but
he stands tongue-tied, mumbling "bud, bud."*

LACY

Why speak'st not, Bungay? Friar, to thy book.

MARGARET

How look'st thou, friar, as a man distraught?
Reft of thy senses, Bungay? Show by signs,
If thou be dumb, what passion holdeth thee.

LACY

He's dumb indeed. Bacon hath with his devils
Enchanted him, or else some strange disease
Or apoplexy hath possess'd his lungs.

But, Peggy, what he cannot with his book,
We'll 'twixt us both unite it up in heart.

MARGARET

Else let me die, my lord, a miscreant.

PRINCE EDWARD

Why stands Friar Bungay so amaz'd?

BACON

I have struck him dumb, my lord; and, if your honour please,
I'll fetch this Bungay straightway from Fressingfield,
And he shall dine with us in Oxford here.

PRINCE EDWARD

Bacon, do that, and thou contentest me.

LACY

Of courtesy, Margaret, let us lead the friar
Unto thy father's lodge, to comfort him
With broths, to bring him from this hapless trance.

MARGARET

Or else, my lord, we were passing unkind
To leave the friar so in his distress.

A devil appears in the glass and carries off Bungay on his back.

[*Terrified.*] O, help, my lord! A devil, a devil, my lord!
Look how he carries Bungay on his back!
Let's hence, for Bacon's spirits be abroad.

The figures in the glass disappear.

PRINCE EDWARD

Bacon, I laugh to see the jolly friar
Mounted upon the devil, and how the earl
Flees with his bonny lass for fear.

As soon as Bungay is at Brazen-nose,
And I have chatted with the merry friar,
I will in post hie me to Fressingfield,
And quite these wrongs on Lacy ere 't be long.

BACON

So be it, my lord: but let us to our dinner;
For ere we have taken our repast awhile,
We shall have Bungay brought to Brazen-nose.

SCENE VII

*In the Regent-house at Oxford, the Doctors, Burden,
Mason and Clement, discuss the preparations neces-
sary for the royal visitors.*

MASON

Now that we are gather'd in the Regent-house,
It fits us talk about the king's repair,
For he, troopèd with all the western kings,
That lie alongst the Dantzic seas by east,
North by the clime of frosty Germany,
The Almain monarch, and the Saxon duke,
Castile and lovely Elinor with him,
Have in their jests resolv'd for Oxford town.

BURDEN

We must lay plots of stately tragedies,
Strange comic shows, such as proud Roscius
Vaunted before the Roman emperors,
To welcome all the western potentates.

CLEMENT

But more; the king by letters hath foretold
That Frederick, the Almain emperor,
Hath brought with him a German of esteem,
Whose surname is Don Jaques Vandermaſt,
Skilful in magic and those secret arts.

MASON

Then must we all make suit unto the friar,
To Friar Bacon, that he vouch this task,
And undertake to countervail in skill
The German; else there 's none in Oxford can
Match and dispute with learnèd Vandermaſt.

BURDEN

Bacon, if he will hold the German play,
Will teach him what an English friar can do—
The devil, I think, dare not dispute with him.

CLEMENT

Indeed, Mas Doctor, he displeasur'd you,
In that he brought your hostess with her spit,
From Henley, posting unto Brazen-nose.

BURDEN [*ruefully*]

A vengeance on the friar for his pains!
But leaving that, let 's hie to Bacon straight,
To see if he will take this task in hand.

CLEMENT

Stay, what rumour is this? The town is up in a mutiny: what
hurly-burly is this?

*The Constable appears, leading in the fool, amiably
drunk; Warren, Ermsby and Miles follow.*

CONSTABLE

Nay, masters, if you were ne'er so good, you shall before the
doctors to answer your misdemeanour.

BURDEN

What 's the matter, fellow?

CONSTABLE

Marry, sir, here 's a company of rufflers, that, drinking in
the tavern, have made a great brawl and almost killed the
vintner.

MILES

Salve, Doctor Burden!
This lubberly lurd
Ill-shap'd and ill-fac'd,
Disdain'd and disgrac'd,
What he tells unto *vobis*
Mentitur de nobis.

BURDEN

Who is the master and chief of this crew?

MILES [*pointing at the prisoner*]

Ecce asinum mundi
Figura rotundi,
Neat, sheat, and fine,
As brisk as a cup of wine.

BURDEN [*to the fool*]

What are you?

RALPH

I am, father doctor, as a man would say, the bell-wether of this company: these are my lords, and I the Prince of Wales.

CLEMENT [*somewhat incredulous*]

Are you Edward, the king's son?

RALPH

Sirrah Miles, bring hither the tapster that drew the wine, and, I warrant, when they see how soundly I have broke his head, they'll say 'twas done by no less man than a prince.

MASON

I cannot believe that this is the Prince of Wales.

WARREN

And why so, sir?

MASON

For they say the prince is a brave and a wise gentleman.

WARREN

Why, and think'st thou, doctor, that he is not so?
Dar'st thou detract and derogate from him,
Being so lovely and so brave a youth?

ERMSBY

Whose face, shining with many a sugar'd smile,
Bewrays that he is bred of princely race.

MILES

And yet, Master Doctor,
To speak like a proctor,
And tell unto you
What is veriment and true;
To cease of this quarrel,
Look but on his apparel;
Then mark but my talis,
He is great Prince of Walis,
The chief of our *gregis*,
And *filius regis*:
Then 'ware what is done,
For he is Henry's white son.

RALPH [*unsteadily*]

Doctors, whose doting night-caps are not capable of my ingenious dignity, know that I am Edward Plantagenet, whom if you displease, will make a ship that shall hold all your colleges, and so carry away the university with a fair wind to the Bankside in Southwark. How sayest thou, Ned Warren, shall I not do it?

WARREN

Yes, my good lord; and, if it please your lordship, I will gather up all your old pantofles, and with the cork make you a pinnace of five-hundred ton, that shall serve the turn marvellous well, my lord.

ERMSBY

And I, my lord, will have pioners to undermine the town,

that the very gardens and orchards be carried away for your summer-walks.

MILES

And I, with *scientia*
And great *diligentia*,
Will conjure and charm,
To keep you from harm;
That *utrum horum mavis*,
Your very great *navis*,
Like Barclay's ship,
From Oxford do skip
With colleges and schools,
Full-loaden with fools.
Quid dicis ad hoc,
Worshipful *Domine* Dawcock?

CLEMENT

Why, hare-brain'd courtiers, are you drunk or mad,
To taunt us up with such scurrility?
Deem you us men of base and light esteem,
To bring us such a fop for Henry's son?
[*To the constable.*] Call out the beadles and convey them hence
Straight to Bocardo: let the roisters lie
Close clapt in bolts, until their wits be tame.

ERMSBY

Why, shall we to prison, my lord?

RALPH

What sayest, Miles, shall I honour the prison with my
presence?

MILES

No, no; out with your blades,
And hamper these jades;
Have a flurt and a crash,
Now play revel-dash,
And teach these sacerdos

That the Bocardos,
Like peasants and elves,
Are meet for themselves.

MASON

To the prison with them, constable.

WARREN

Well, doctors, seeing I have sported me
With laughing at these mad and merry-wags,
Know that Prince Edward is at Brazen-nose,
And this, attired like the Prince of Wales,
Is Ralph, King Henry's only lovèd fool;
I, Earl of Sussex, and this Ermsby,
One of the privy-chamber to the king;
Who, while the prince with Friar Bacon stays,
Have revell'd it in Oxford as you see.

MASON [*uncovering respectfully*]

My lord, pardon us, we knew not what you were;
But courtiers may make greater scapes than these.
Wilt please your honour dine with me to-day?

WARREN

I will, Master Doctor, and satisfy the vintner for his hurt;
only I must desire you to imagine him all this forenoon the
Prince of Wales.

MASON

I will, sir.

RALPH

And upon that I will lead the way; only I will have Miles
go before me, because I have heard Henry say that wisdom
must go before majesty.

SCENE VIII

Prince Edward, having ridden post to Fressingfield, meets the lovers. He draws his dagger.

PRINCE EDWARD

Lacy, thou canst not shroud thy traitorous thoughts,
Nor cover, as did Cassius, all thy wiles;
For Edward hath an eye that looks as far
As Lynceus from the shores of Græcia.
Did not I sit in Oxford by the friar,
And see thee court the maid of Fressingfield,
Sealing thy flattering fancies with a kiss?
Did not proud Bungay draw his portage forth,
And joining hand in hand had married you,
If Friar Bacon had not struck him dumb,
And mounted him upon a spirit's back,
That we might chat at Oxford with the friar?
Traitor, what answer'st? Is not all this true?

LACY [*kneeling*]

Truth all, my lord; and thus I make reply.
At Harleston Fair, there courting for your grace,
Whenas mine eye survey'd her curious shape,
And drew the beauteous glory of her looks
To dive into the centre of my heart,
Love taught me that your honour did but jest,
That princes were in fancy but as men;
How that the lovely maid of Fressingfield
Was fitter to be Lacy's wedded wife
Than concubine unto the Prince of Wales.

PRINCE EDWARD

Injurious Lacy, did I love thee more
Than Alexander his Hephæstion?
Did I unfold the passions of my love,
And lock them in the closet of thy thoughts?
Wert thou to Edward second to himself,
Sole friend, and partner of his secret loves?

And could a glance of fading beauty break
Th' enchainèd fetters of such private friends?
Base coward, false, and too effeminate
To be co-rival with a prince in thoughts!
From Oxford have I posted since I din'd,
To quite a traitor 'fore that Edward sleep.

MARGARET [*coming between them*]

'Twas I, my lord, not Lacy, stept awry.
For oft he sued and courted for yourself,
And still woo'd for the courtier all in green;
But I, whom fancy made but over-fond,
Pleaded myself with looks as if I lov'd.
I fed mine eye with gazing on his face,
And still bewitch'd lov'd Lacy with my looks;
My heart with sighs, mine eyes pleaded with tears,
My face held pity and content at once,
And more I could not cipher-out by signs,
But that I lov'd Lord Lacy with my heart.
Then, worthy Edward, measure with thy mind
If women's favours will not force men fall;
If beauty, and if darts of piercing love,
Are not of force to bury thoughts of friends.

PRINCE EDWARD

I tell thee, Peggy, I will have thy loves;
Edward or none shall conquer Margaret.
In frigates bottom'd with rich Sethin planks,
Topt with the lofty firs of Lebanon,
Stemm'd and incas'd with burnish'd ivory,
And over-laid with plates of Persian wealth,
Like Thetis shalt thou wanton on the waves,
And draw the dolphins to thy lovely eyes,
To dance lavoltas in the purple streams.
Sirens, with harps and silver psalteries,
Shall wait with music at thy frigate's stem,
And entertain fair Margaret with their lays.
England and England's wealth shall wait on thee;
Britain shall bend unto her prince's love,

And do due homage to thine excellence,
If thou wilt be but Edward's Margaret.

MARGARET

Pardon, my lord; if Jove's great royalty
Sent me such presents as to Danaë;
If Phœbus, 'tirèd in Latona's webs,
Came courting from the beauty of his lodge;
The dulcet tunes of frolic Mercury,
Nor all the wealth heaven's treasury affords,
Should make me leave Lord Lacy or his love.

PRINCE EDWARD

I have learn'd at Oxford, then, this point of schools—
Ablata causa, tollitur effectus:
Lacy, the cause that Margaret cannot love
Nor fix her liking on the English Prince,
Take him away, and then th' effects will fail.
[*Raising his dagger.*] Villain, prepare thyself; for I will bathe
My poniard in the bosom of an earl.

LACY

Rather than live, and miss fair Margaret's love,
Prince Edward, stop not at the fatal doom,
But stab it home: end both my loves and life.

MARGARET [*holding his arm*]

Brave Prince of Wales, honour'd for royal deeds,
'Twere sin to stain fair Venus' courts with blood;
Love's conquest ends, my lord, in courtesy.
Spare Lacy, gentle Edward; let me die,
For so both you and he do cease your loves.

PRINCE EDWARD

Lacy shall die as a traitor to his lord.

LACY

I have deserv'd it, Edward; act it well.

MARGARET

What hopes the prince to gain by Lacy's death?

PRINCE EDWARD

To end the loves 'twixt him and Margaret.

MARGARET [*proudly*]

Why, thinks King Henry's son that Margaret's love
Hangs in th' uncertain balance of proud time?
That death shall make a discord of our thoughts?
No, stab the earl, and, 'fore the morning sun
Shall vaunt him thrice over the lofty east,
Margaret will meet her Lacy in the heavens.

LACY

If aught betides to lovely Margaret
That wrongs or wrings her honour from content,
Europe's rich wealth nor England's monarchy
Should not allure Lacy to over-live.
Then, Edward, short my life, and end her loves.

MARGARET

Rid me, and keep a friend worth many loves.

LACY

Nay, Edward, keep a love worth many friends.

MARGARET

And if thy mind be such as fame hath blaz'd,
Then, princely Edward, let us both abide
The fatal resolution of thy rage.
Banish thou fancy, and embrace revenge,
And in one tomb knit both our carcasses,
Whose hearts were linkèd in one perfect love.

PRINCE EDWARD [*to himself, as his better feelings begin to gain the mastery*]

Edward, art thou that famous Prince of Wales
Who at Damasco beat the Saracens,

And brought'st home triumph on thy lance's point?
And shall thy plumes be pull'd by Venus down?
Is 't princely to dissever lovers' leagues,
To part such friends as glory in their loves?
Leave, Ned, and make a virtue of this fault,
And further Peg and Lacy in their loves.
So in subduing fancy's passion,
Conquering thyself, thou gett'st the richest spoil.
[*Sheathing his poniard.*] Lacy, rise up. [*Lacy rises.*] Fair Peggy,
here 's my hand:
The Prince of Wales hath conquer'd all his thoughts,
And all his loves he yields unto the earl.
[*Joining their bands.*] Lacy, enjoy the maid of Fressingfield;
Make her thy Lincoln Countess at the church,
And Ned, as he is true Plantagenet,
Will give her to thee frankly for thy wife.

LACY

Humbly I take her of my sovereign,
As if that Edward gave me England's right,
And rich'd me with the Albion diadem.

MARGARET

And doth the English prince mean true?
Will he vouchsafe to cease his former loves,
And yield the title of a country maid
Unto Lord Lacy?

PRINCE EDWARD

I will, fair Peggy, as I am true lord.

MARGARET

Then, lordly sir, whose conquest is as great,
In conquering love, as Cæsar's victories,
Margaret, as mild and humble in her thoughts
As was Aspasia unto Cyrus self,
Yields thanks, and, next Lord Lacy, doth enshrine
Edward the second secret in her heart.

PRINCE EDWARD [*his good humour quite restored*]

Gramercy, Peggy! Now that vows are past,
And that your loves are not to be revolt,
Once, Lacy, friends again. Come, we will post
To Oxford; for this day the king is there,
And brings for Edward Castile Elinor.
Peggy, I must go see and view my wife;
I pray God I like her as I lovèd thee.
Beside, Lord Lincoln, we shall hear dispute
'Twixt Friar Bacon and learn'd Vandermaſt.
Peggy, we'll leave you for a week or two.

MARGARET

As it please Lord Lacy; but love's foolish looks
Think footsteps miles and minutes to be hours.

LACY

I'll hasten, Peggy, to make short return.
But please your honour go unto the lodge,
We shall have butter, cheese, and venison;
And yesterday I brought for Margaret
A lusty bottle of neat claret-wine—
Thus can we feast and entertain your grace.

PRINCE EDWARD

'Tis cheer, Lord Lacy, for an emperor,
If he respect the person and the place.
Come, let us in; for I will all this night
Ride post until I come to Bacon's cell.

SCENE IX

*King Henry, with the Emperor, the King of Castile
and the Princess Elinor, have reached Oxford;
Vandermaſt and Friar Bungay follow.*

EMPEROR

Trust me, Plantagenet, these Oxford schools
Are richly seated near the river-side.
The mountains full of fat and fallow deer,

The battling pastures lade with kind and flocks,
The town gorgeous with high-built colleges,
And scholars seemly in their grave attire,
Learnèd in searching principles of art.
What is thy judgment, Jaques Vandermaſt?

VANDERMAST [*arrogantly*]

That lordly are the buildings of the town,
Spacious the rooms, and full of pleasant walks;
[*With a shrug*] But for the doctors, how that they be learnèd,
It may be meanly, for aught I can hear.

BUNGAY [*hotly*]

I tell thee, German, Hapsburg holds none such,
None read so deep as Oxenford contains.
There are within our academic state
Men that may lecture it in Germany
To all the doctors of your Belgic schools.

KING HENRY

Stand to him, Bungay, charm this Vandermaſt,
And I will use thee as a royal king.

*King Henry and his guests take their seats to listen
to the disputations of the two doctors.*

VANDERMAST

Wherein dar'st thou dispute with me?

BUNGAY

In what a doctor and a friar can.

VANDERMAST

Before rich Europe's worthies put thou forth
The doubtful question unto Vandermaſt.

BUNGAY

Let it be this—Whether the spirits of pyromancy or geomancy
be moſt predominant in magic?

VANDERMAST

I say, of pyromancy.

BUNGAY

And I, of geomancy.

VANDERMAST

The cabalists, that write of magic spells,
As Hermes, Melchie, and Pythagoras,
Affirm that, 'mongst the quadruplicity
Of elemental essence, *terra* is but thought
To be a *punctum* squarèd to the rest;
And that the compass of ascending elements
Exceed in bigness as they do in height;
Judging the concave circle of the sun
To hold the rest in his circumference.
If, then, as Hermes says, the fire be greatest,
Purest, and only giveth shape to spirits,
Then must these dæmones that haunt that place
Be every way superior to the rest.

BUNGAY

I reason not of elemental shapes,
Nor tell I of the concave latitudes,
Noting their essence nor their quality,
But of the spirits that pyromancy calls,
And of the vigour of the geomantic fiends
I tell thee, German, magic haunts the ground,
And those strange necromantic spells,
That work such shows and wondering in the world,
Are acted by those geomantic spirits
That Hermes calleth *terræ filii*.
The fiery spirits are but transparent shades,
That lightly pass as heralds to bear news;
But earthly fiends, clos'd in the lowest deep,
Dissever mountains, if they be but charg'd,
Being more gross and massy in their power.

VANDERMAST

Rather these earthly geomantic spirits
Are dull and like the place where they remain;
For when proud Lucifer fell from the heavens,

The spirits and angels that did sin with him,
Retain'd their local essence as their faults,
All subject under Luna's continent.
They which offended less hung in the fire,
And second faults did rest within the air;
But Lucifer and his proud-hearted fiends
Were thrown into the centre of the earth,
Having less understanding than the rest,
As having greater sin and lesser grace.
Therefore such gross and earthly spirits do serve
For jugglers, witches, and vile sorcerers;
Whereas the pyromantic genii
Are mighty, swift, and of far-reaching power.
But grant that geomancy hath most force;
Bungay, to please these mighty potentates,
Prove by some instance what thy art can do.

BUNGAY

I will.

EMPEROR

Now, English Harry, here begins the game;
We shall see sport between these learned men.

VANDERMAST

What wilt thou do?

BUNGAY

Show thee the tree, leav'd with refinèd gold,
Whereon the fearful dragon held his seat,
That watch'd the garden call'd Hesperides,
Subdued and won by conquering Hercules.

Bungay utters his spell and a golden tree rises from the ground, with a dragon in its branches, spitting out fire. Friar Bungay steps back and Vandermaſt comes forward.

VANDERMAST

Well done!

KING HENRY

What say you, royal lordlings, to my friar?
Hath he not done a point of cunning skill?

VANDERMAST [*contemptuously*]

Each scholar in the necromantic spells
Can do as much as Bungay hath perform'd!
But as Alcmena's bastard raz'd this tree,
So will I raise him up as when he liv'd,
And cause him pull the dragon from his seat,
And tear the branches piecemeal from the root.

[*He conjures.*] Hercules! *Prodi, prodi, Hercules!*

*By the side of the tree, appears the figure of Hercules,
wearing his lion's skin.*

HERCULES

Quis me vult?

VANDERMAST

Jove's bastard son, thou Libyan Hercules,
Pull off the sprigs from off th' Hesperian tree,
As once thou didst to win the golden fruit.

HERCULES

Fiat.

*Hercules begins to tear down the branches from
Bungay's golden tree.*

VANDERMAST

Now, Bungay, if thou canst by magic charm
The fiend, appearing like great Hercules,
From pulling down the branches of the tree,
Then art thou worthy to be counted learnèd.

BUNGAY [*crestfallen*]

I cannot.

VANDERMAST

Cease, Hercules, until I give thee charge.

[*Addressing the King.*] Mighty commander of this English isle,
Henry, come from the stout Plantagenets,

Bungay is learn'd enough to be a friar;
But to compare with Jaques Vandermast,
Oxford and Cambridge must go seek their cells
To find a man to match him in his art.
I have given non-plus to the Paduans,
To them of Sien, Florence, and Bologna,
Rheims, Louvain, and fair Rotterdam,
Frankfort, Utretcht, and Orleans:
And now must Henry, if he do me right,
Crown me with laurel, as they all have done.

Friar Bacon enters.

BACON

All hail to this royal company,
That sit to hear and see this strange dispute!
Bungay, how stand'st thou as a man amaz'd?
What, hath the German acted more than thou?

VANDERMAST [*taken aback*]

What art thou that question'st thus?

BACON

Men call me Bacon.

VANDERMAST

Lordly thou look'st, as if that thou wert learn'd;
Thy countenance as if science held her seat
Between the circled arches of thy brows.

KING HENRY

Now, monarchs, hath the German found his match.

EMPEROR

Bestir thee, Jaques, take not now the foil,
Lest thou dost lose what foretime thou didst gain.

VANDERMAST

Bacon, wilt thou dispute?

BACON

No,
Unless he were more learn'd than Vandermaſt—
For yet, tell me, what haſt thou done?

VANDERMAST

Rais'd Hercules to ruinate that tree
That Bungay mounted by his magic ſpells.

BACON [*quietly*]

Set Hercules to work.

VANDERMAST

Now, Hercules, I charge thee to thy taſk;
Pull off the golden branches from the root.

HERCULES

I dare not. See'ſt thou not great Bacon here,
Whose frown doth act more than thy magic can?
*Vandermaſt goes up to Hercules and utters his con-
jurations more vehemently.*

VANDERMAST

By all the thrones and dominations,
Virtues, powers, and mighty hierarchies,
I charge thee to obey to Vandermaſt.

HERCULES

Bacon, that bridles headſtrong Belcephon,
And rules Asmenoth, guider of the north,
Binds me from yielding unto Vandermaſt.

KING HENRY

How now, Vandermaſt, have you met with your match?

VANDERMAST [*with awe*]

Never before was 't known to Vandermaſt
That men held devils in ſuch obedient awe.
Bacon doth more than art, or else I fail.

EMPEROR

Why, Vandermaſt, art thou overcome?
Bacon, diſpute with him, and try his ſkill.

BACON

I came not, monarchs, for to hold diſpute
With ſuch a novice as is Vandermaſt;
I came to have your royalties to dine
With Friar Bacon here in Brazen-nose.
And, for this German troubles but the place,
And holds this audience with a long ſuſpenſe,
I'll ſend him to his académy hence.
Thou Hercules, whom Vandermaſt did raiſe,
Transport the German unto Hapsburg ſtraight,
That he may learn by travail, 'gainſt the ſpring,
More ſecret dooms and aphoriſms of art.
Vanish the tree, and thou away with him!
*Hercules ſiezes Vandermaſt with one hand and the
tree with the other, and all vanish.*

EMPEROR

Why, Bacon, whither doſt thou ſend him?

BACON

To Hapsburg: there your highneſs at return
Shall find the German in his ſtudy ſafe.

KING HENRY

Bacon, thou haſt honour'd England with thy ſkill,
And made fair Oxford famous by thine art—
I will be Engliſh Henry to myſelf.
But tell me, ſhall we dine with thee to-day?

BACON

With me, my lord; and while I fit my cheer,
See where Prince Edward comes to welcome you,
Gracious as is the morning-ſtar of heaven.
*Friar Bacon takes his leave as Prince Edward enters
accompanied by Lacy, Warren and Ermsby.*

EMPEROR

Is this Prince Edward, Henry's royal son?
How martial is the figure of his face!
Yet lovely and beset with amorets.

KING HENRY

Ned, where hast thou been?

PRINCE EDWARD

At Framlingham, my lord, to try your bucks
If they could scape the teasers or the toil.
But hearing of these lordly potentates,
Landed, and progress'd up to Oxford town,
I posted to give entertain to them—
Chief to the Almain monarch; next to him,
And joint with him, Castile and Saxony
Are welcome as they may be to the English court.
Thus for the men: [*going up to Princess Elinor*] but see, Venus
appears,
Or one that overmatcheth Venus in her shape!
[*Taking her hand.*] Sweet Elinor, beauty's high-swellung pride,
Rich nature's glory and her wealth at once,
Fair of all fairs, welcome to Albion;
Welcome to me, and welcome to thine own,
If that thou deign'st the welcome from myself.

ELINOR

Martial Plantagenet, Henry's high-minded son,
The mark that Elinor did count her aim,
I lik'd thee 'fore I saw thee; now I love,
And so as in so short a time I may;
Yet so as time shall never break that so,
And therefore so accept of Elinor.

KING OF CASTILE

Fear not, my lord, this couple will agree,
If love may creep into their wanton eyes—
And therefore, Edward, I accept thee here,
Without suspence, as my adopted son.

KING HENRY

Let me that joy in these consorting greets,
And glory in these honours done to Ned,
Yield thanks for all these favours to my son,
And rest a true Plantagenet to all.

*Miles shuffles in, a napkin over his shoulder, carrying
a table-cloth, trenchers and a saltcellar.*

MILES

Salvete, omnes reges,
That govern your *greges*
In Saxony and Spain,
In England and in Almain!
For all this frolic rabble
Must I cover the table
With trenchers, salt, and cloth;
And then look for your broth.

EMPEROR

What pleasant fellow is this?

KING HENRY

'Tis, my lord, Doctor Bacon's poor scholar.

MILES [*muttering to himself as he spreads the cloth*]

My master hath made me sewer of these great lords; and,
God knows, I am as serviceable at a table as a sow is under
an apple-tree. 'Tis no matter; their cheer shall not be great,
and therefore what skills where the salt stand, before or
behind?

He goes out again.

KING OF CASTILE

These scholars know more skill in axioms,
How to use quips and sleights of sophistry,
Than for to cover courtly for a king.

*Miles returns carrying a bowl of pottage; Friar
Bacon follows.*

MILES [*looking back over his shoulder*]

Spill, sir? Why, do you think I never carried twopenny chop
before in my life?

By your leave, *nobile decus*,
For here comes Doctor Bacon's *pecus*,
Being in his full age
To carry a mess of pottage.

BACON

Lordings, admire not if your cheer be this,
For we must keep our academic fare;
No riot where philosophy doth reign.
And therefore, Henry, place these potentates,
And bid them fall unto their frugal cates.

EMPEROR [*indignantly*]

Presumptuous friar! What, scoff'st thou at a king?
What, dost thou taunt us with thy peasants' fare,
And give us cates fit for country swains?
Henry, proceeds this jest of thy consent,
To twit us with such a pittance of such price?
Tell me, and Frederick will not grieve thee long.

KING HENRY

By Henry's honour, and the royal faith
The English monarch beareth to his friend,
I knew not of the friar's feeble fare,
Nor am I pleas'd he entertains you thus.

BACON

Content thee, Frederick, for I show'd these cates,
To let thee see how scholars use to feed;
How little meat refines our English wits.
Miles, take away, and let it be thy dinner.

MILES

Marry, sir, I will!
This day shall be a festival-day with me;
For I shall exceed in the highest degree.

He whips up the pottage and runs off with it.

BACON

I tell thee, monarch, all the German peers
Could not afford thy entertainment such,
So royal and so full of majesty,
As Bacon will present to Frederick.
The basest waiter that attends thy cups
Shall be in honours greater than thyself;
And for thy cates, rich Alexandria drugs,
Fetch'd by carvels from Egypt's richest streights,
Found in the wealthy strand of Africa,
Shall royalise the table of my king.
Wines richer than th' Egyptian courtesan
Quaff'd to Augustus' kingly countermatch,
Shall be carous'd in English Henry's feast.
Candy shall yield the richest of her canes;
Persia, down her Volga by canoes,
Send down the secrets of her spicery.
The Afric dates, mirabolans of Spain,
Conserves and suckets from Tiberias,
Cates from Judæa, choicer than the lamp
That fired Rome with sparks of gluttony,
Shall beautify the board for Frederick—
And therefore grudge not at a friar's feast.
He leads the way out; his guests follow.

SCENE X

*At Fressing field, two farmers, Lambert and Serlsby
approach the Keeper together, to ask for Margaret's
hand in marriage.*

LAMBERT

Come, frolic Keeper of our liege's game,
Whose table spread hath ever venison
And jacks of wine to welcome passengers,
Know I'm in love with jolly Margaret,
That overshines our damsels as the moon
Darkeneth the brightest sparkles of the night.

In Laxfield here my land and living lies:
I'll make thy daughter jointer of it all,
So thou consent to give her to my wife—
And I can spend five hundred marks a year.

SERLSBY

I am the lands-lord, Keeper, of thy holds,
By copy all thy living lies in me;
Laxfield did never see me raise my due.
I will enfeof fair Margaret in all,
So she will take her to a lusty squire.

KEEPER

Now, courteous gentles, if the Keeper's girl
Hath pleas'd the liking fancy of you both,
And with her beauty hath subdued your thoughts,
'Tis doubtful to decide the question.
It joys me that such men of great esteem
Should lay their liking on this base estate,
And that her state should grow so fortunate
To be a wife to meaner men than you.
But sith such squires will stoop to keeper's fee,
I will, to avoid displeasure of you both,
Call Margaret forth, and she shall make her choice.
The Keeper goes into the house.

LAMBERT

Content, Keeper; send her unto us.
Why, Serlsby, is thy wife so lately dead,
Are all thy loves so lightly passèd over,
As thou canst wed before the year be out?

SERLSBY

I live not, Lambert, to content the dead,
Nor was I wedded but for life to her.
The grave ends and begins a married state.
Margaret comes out.

LAMBERT

Peggy, the lovely flower of all towns,
Suffolk's fair Helen, and rich England's star,

Whose beauty, temper'd with her huswifery,
Makes England talk of merry Fressingfield!

SERLSBY

I cannot trick it up with poesies,
Nor paint my passions with comparisons;
Nor tell a tale of Phœbus and his loves.
But this believe me—Laxfield here is mine,
Of ancient rent seven hundred pounds a-year,
And if thou canst but love a country squire,
I will enfeoff thee, Margaret, in all.
I cannot flatter; try me, if thou please.

MARGARET

Brave neighbouring squires, the stay of Suffolk's clime,
A keeper's daughter is too base in gree
To match with men accounted of such worth.
But might I not displease, I would reply.

LAMBERT

Say, Peggy; naught shall make us discontent.

MARGARET

Then, gentles, note that love hath little stay,
Nor can the flames that Venus sets on fire
Be kindled but by fancy's motion.
Then pardon, gentles, if a maid's reply
Be doubtful while I have debated with myself,
Who, or of whom, love shall constrain me like.

SERLSBY

Let it be me; and trust me, Margaret,
The meads environ'd with the silver streams,
Whose battling pastures fatteneth all my flocks,
Yielding forth fleeces stapled with such wool
As Lemnster cannot yield more finer stuff,
And forty kine with fair and burnish'd heads,
With strouting dugs that paggle to the ground,
Shall serve thy dairy, if thou wed with me.

LAMBERT

Let pass the country wealth, as flocks and kine,
And lands that wave with Ceres' golden sheaves,
Filling my barns with plenty of the fields;
But, Peggy, if thou wed thyself to me,
Thou shalt have garments of embroider'd silk,
Lawns, and rich net-works for thy head-attire—
Costly shall be thy fair habiliments,
If thou wilt be but Lambert's loving wife.

MARGARET

Content you, gentles, you have proffer'd fair,
And more than fits a country maid's degree.
But give me leave to counsel me a time,
For fancy blooms not at the first assault;
Give me but ten days' respite, and I will reply,
Which or to whom myself affectionates.

SERLSBY

Lambert, I tell thee, thou'rt importunate;
Such beauty fits not such a base esquire—
It is for Sersby to have Margaret.

LAMBERT [*angrily*]

Think'st thou with wealth to overreach me?
Sersby, I scorn to brook thy country braves.
I dare thee, coward, to maintain this wrong,
At dint of rapier, single in the field.

SERLSBY

I'll answer, Lambert, what I have avouch'd.
Margaret, farewell; another time shall serve.
He strides away.

LAMBERT

I'll follow. Peggy, farewell to thyself;
Listen how well I'll answer for thy love.
He follows Sersby.

MARGARET

How fortune tempers lucky haps with frowns,
And wrongs me with the sweets of my delight!
Love is my bliss, and love is now my bale.
Shall I be Helen in my froward fates,
As I am Helen in my matchless hue,
And set rich Suffolk with my face afire?
If lovely Lacy were but with his Peggy,
The cloudy darkness of his bitter frown
Would check the pride of these aspiring squires.
Before the term of ten days be expir'd,
Whenas they look for answer of their loves,
My lord will come to merry Fressingfield,
And end their fancies and their follies both.
Till when, Peggy, be blithe and of good cheer.

A postboy enters.

POSTBOY

Fair lovely damsel, which way leads this path?
How might I post me unto Fressingfield?
Which footpath leadeth to the Keeper's lodge?

MARGARET

Your way is ready, and this path is right.
Myself do dwell hereby in Fressingfield;
And if the Keeper be the man you seek,
I am his daughter—may I know the cause?

POSTBOY [*gazing at her with admiration*]

Lovely, and once belovèd of my lord;
No marvel if his eye was lodg'd so low,
When brighter beauty is not in the heavens.
The Lincoln Earl hath sent you letters here,
And, with them, just an hundred pounds in gold.
Sweet, bonny wench, read them, and make reply.

He gives her a letter and a bag.

MARGARET

The scrolls that Jove sent Danaë,
Wrapt in rich closures of fine burnish'd gold,

Were not more welcome than these lines to me,
Tell me, whilst that I do unrip the seals,
Lives Lacy well? How fares my lovely lord?

POSTBOY

Well, if that wealth may make men to live well.

MARGARET [*breaking the seal and reading*]

"The blooms of the almond-tree grow in a night, and vanish in a morn; the flies bæmeræ, fair Peggy, take life with the sun, and die with the dew; fancy that slippeth in with a gaze, goeth out with a wink; and too timely loves have ever the shortest length. I write this as thy grief, and my folly, who at Fressing field loved that which time hath taught me to be but mean dainties. Eyes are dissemblers, and fancy is but queasy; therefore know, Margaret, I have chosen a Spanish lady to be my wife, chief waiting-woman to the Princess Elinor; a lady fair, and no less fair than thyself, honourable and wealthy. In that I forsake thee, I leave thee to thine own liking; and for thy dowry I have sent thee an hundred pounds; and ever assure thee of my favour, which shall avail thee and thine much. Farewell. Not thine, nor his own, Edward Lacy."

[*In despair.*] Fond Ate, doomer of bad-boding fates,
That wrapp'st proud fortune in thy snaky locks,
Didst thou enchant my birth-day with such stars
As lighten'd mischief from their infancy?
If heavens had vow'd, if stars had made decree,
To show on me their froward influence,
If Lacy had but lov'd, heavens, hell, and all,
Could not have wrong'd the patience of my mind.

POSTBOY

It grieves me, damsel; but the earl is forced
To love the lady by the king's command.

MARGARET [*reproachfully*]

The wealth combin'd within the English shelves,
Europe's commander, nor the English king,
Should not have mov'd the love of Peggy from her lord.

POSTBOY

What answer shall I return to my lord?

MARGARET

First, for thou cam'st from Lacy whom I lov'd—
Ah, give me leave to sigh at every thought!—
Take thou, my friend, the hundred pounds he sent;
For Margaret's resolution craves no dower.
The world shall be to her as vanity;
Wealth, trash; love, hate; pleasure, despair:
For I will straight to stately Framlingham,
And in the abbey there be shorn a nun,
And yield my loves and liberty to God.
[*Handing back the bag.*] Fellow, I give thee this, not for the news,
For those be hateful unto Margaret,
But for thou'rt Lacy's man, once Margaret's love.

POSTBOY

What I have heard, what passions I have seen,
I'll make report of them unto the earl.

MARGARET

Say that she joys his fancies be at rest,
And prays that his misfortune may be hers.

SCENE XI

Very late at night, Friar Bacon waits in his study at Oxford for the long-expected moment when the Brazen Head shall at last speak. He is worn out with continuous watching, and lies on his bed, with his magic staff in his hand and a lighted lamp by his side. Miles, having been ordered to continue the watch while his master takes a rest, bustles about collecting weapons. He comes in with two pistols stuck in his belt, and a brown bill in his hand. The Brazen Head, on a pedestal, stands in the centre of the study.

BACON

Miles, where are you?

MILES

Here, sir.

BACON

How chance you tarry so long?

MILES

Think you that the watching of the Brazen Head craves no furniture? I warrant you, sir, I have so armed myself that if all your devils come, I will not fear them an inch.

BACON

Miles,

Thou know'st that I have divèd into hell,
And sought the darkeſt palaces of fiends;
That with my magic ſpells great Belcephon
Hath left his lodge and kneelèd at my cell;
The rafters of the earth rent from the poles,
And three-form'd Luna hid her ſilver looks,
Trembling upon her concave continent,
When Bacon read upon his magic book.
With ſeven years' tossing necromantic charms,
Poring upon dark Hecat's principles,
I have fram'd out a monſtrous head of braſs,
That, by the enchanting forces of the devil,
Shall tell out ſtrange and uncouth aphoriſms,
And girt fair England with a wall of braſs.
Bungay and I have watch'd theſe threſcore days,
And now our vital ſpirits crave ſome reſt.
If Argus liv'd, and had his hundred eyes,
They could not over-watch Phobetor's night.
[*Very ſolemnly.*] Now, Miles, in thee reſts Friar Bacon's weal.
The honour and renown of all his life
Hangs in the watching of this Brazen Head;
Therefore I charge thee by the immortal God,
That holds the ſouls of men within His fiſt,
This night thou watch; for ere the morning-ſtar
Sends out his glorious glister on the north,
The head will ſpeak! Then, Miles, upon thy life,

Wake me; for then by magic art I'll work
To end my seven years' task with excellence.
If that a wink but shut thy watchful eye,
Then farewell Bacon's glory and his fame!
Draw close the curtains, Miles: now, for thy life,
Be watchful, and . . .

He falls asleep.

MILES [*drawing the curtains*]

So; I thought you would talk yourself asleep anon; and 'tis no marvel, for Bungay on the days, and he on the nights, have watched just these ten and fifty days—now this is the night, and 'tis my task, and no more. [*Walking up to the Brazen Head and admiring it.*] Now, Jesus bless me, what a goodly Head it is, and a nose! You talk of *nos autem glorificare*; but here's a nose that I warrant may be called *nos autem popolare* for the people of the parish. Well, I am furnished with weapons; now, sir, I will set me down by a post, and make it as good as a watchman to wake me, if I chance to slumber. [*He sits down against the post which supports the roof of the study: and begins to nod. Then he wakes with a jerk and hits the back of his head.*] I thought, Goodman Head, I would call you out of your memento. Passion o' God, I have almost broke my pate! [*A terrible rumble of thunder is heard. Miles jumps up.*] Up, Miles, to your task; take your brown-bill in your hand; here's some of your master's hobgoblins abroad.

THE BRAZEN HEAD [*speaks*]

TIME IS.

MILES [*contemptuous*]

Time is! Why, Master Brazen-head, have you such a capital nose, and answer you with syllables, "Time is"? Is this all my master's cunning, to spend seven years' study about "Time is"? Well, sir, it may be we shall have some better orations of it anon: well, I'll watch you as narrowly as ever you were watched, and I'll play with you as the nightingale with the slow-worm; I'll set a prick against my breast. [*Lest he should fall asleep again, he leans against the point of his bill.*] Now

rest there, Miles. [*He nods again and almost runs himself through on the bill.*] Lord have mercy upon me, I have almost killed myself! [*Another and a louder peal of thunder.*] Up, Miles; list how they rumble.

THE BRAZEN HEAD [*speaks again*]

TIME WAS.

MILES [*more contemptuous than ever*]

Well, Friar Bacon, you have spent your seven-years' study well, that can make your head speak but two words at once, "Time was." Yea, marry, time was when my master was a wise man, but that was before he began to make the Brazen Head. [*Gazing at his master.*] You shall lie while your arse ache an your Head speak no better. [*Shouldering his bill and marching up and down.*] Well, I will watch, and walk up and down, and be a peripatetian and a philosopher of Aristotle's stamp. [*Another peal of thunder.*] What, a fresh noise? Take thy pistols in hand, Miles.

THE BRAZEN HEAD [*speaks a third time*]

TIME IS PAST.

Then there is a flash of lightning and a hand appears, which breaks the Head with a hammer.

MILES [*running to the bedside in great alarm*]

Master, master, up! Hell's broken loose; your Head speaks; and there's such a thunder and lightning, that I warrant all Oxford is up in arms. Out of your bed, and take a brown-bill in your hand; the latter day is come.

BACON [*jumping out of bed eagerly*]

Miles, I come. O, passing warily watched!
Bacon will make thee next himself in love.
When spake the Head?

MILES

When spake the Head! Did not you say that he should tell strange principles of philosophy? Why, sir, it speaks but two words at a time.

BACON [*in dismay*]

Why, villain, hath it spoken oft?

MILES

Oft! Ay, marry, hath it, thrice; but in all those three times it hath uttered but seven words.

BACON

As how?

MILES

Marry, sir, the first time he said "Time is," as if Fabius Cumentator should have pronounced a sentence; the second time he said "Time was;" and the third time, with thunder and lightning, as in great choler, he said, "Time is past."

BACON [*in despair*]

'Tis past indeed. Ah, villain! time is past.

My life, my fame, my glory, all are past.

Bacon,

The turrets of thy hope are ruin'd down,

Thy seven years' study lieth in the dust.

Thy Brazen Head lies broken through a slave,

That watch'd, and would not when the Head did will.

What said the Head first?

MILES

Even, sir, "Time is."

BACON

Villain, if thou hadst call'd to Bacon then,

If thou hadst watch'd, and wak'd the sleepy friar,

The Brazen Head had utter'd aphorisms,

And England had been circled round with brass.

But proud Asmenoth, ruler of the north,

And Demogorgon, master of the fates,

Grudge that a mortal man should work so much.

Hell trembled at my deep commanding spells,

Fiends frown'd to see a man their over-match;
Bacon might boast more than a man might boast!
But now the braves of Bacon have an end,
Europe's conceit of Bacon hath an end,
His seven years' practice sorteth to ill end—
And, villain, sith my glory hath an end,
I will appoint thee to some fatal end.
Villain, avoid! Get thee from Bacon's sight!
Vagrant, go roam and range about the world,
And perish as a vagabond on earth!

MILES [*in an injured tone*]

Why, then, sir, you forbid me your service?

BACON

My service, villain, with a fatal curse,
That direful plagues and mischief fall on thee.

MILES [*disgusted with the whole business*]

'Tis no matter, I am against you with the old proverb—The more the fox is cursed, the better he fares. God be with you, sir; I'll take but a book in my hand, a wide-sleeved gown on my back, and a crowned cap on my head, and see if I can want promotion.

BACON

Some fiend or ghost haunt on thy weary steps,
Until they do transport thee quick to hell;
For Bacon shall have never merry day,
To lose the fame and honour of his Head.

Miles goes out, leaving his master gazing broken-heartedly at the fragments of the Brazen Head.

SCENE XII

*King Henry, the Emperor, and the King of Castile,
Princess Elinor and Prince Edward enter; Lacy and
the fool follow them.*

EMPEROR

Now, lovely prince, the prime of Albion's wealth,
How fare the Lady Elinor and you?
What, have you courted and found Castile fit
To answer England in equivalence?
Will't be a match 'twixt bonny Nell and thee?

PRINCE EDWARD [*taking Elinor's hand*]

Should Paris enter in the courts of Greece,
And not lie fetter'd in fair Helen's looks?
Or Phœbus scape those piercing amoretts
That Daphne glancèd at his deity?
Can Edward, then, sit by a flame and freeze,
Whose heat puts Helen and fair Daphne down?
Now, monarchs, ask the lady if we gree.

KING HENRY

What, madam, hath my son found grace or no?

ELINOR

Seeing, my lord, his lovely counterfeit,
And hearing how his mind and shape agreed,
I came not, troop'd with all this warlike train,
Doubting of love, but so affectionate,
As Edward hath in England what he won in Spain.

KING OF CASTILE

A match, my lord; these wantons needs must love!
Men must have wives, and women will be wed—
Let's haste the day to honour up the rites.

RALPH [*sidling up to King Henry*]

Sirrah Harry, shall Ned marry Nell?

KING HENRY

Ay, Ralph; how then?

RALPH

Marry, Harry, follow my counsel—send for Friar Bacon to marry them, for he'll so conjure him and her with his necromancy, that they shall love together like pig and lamb whilst they live.

KING OF CASTILE

But hearest thou, Ralph, art thou content to have Elinor to thy lady?

RALPH

Ay, so she will promise me two things.

KING OF CASTILE

What 's that, Ralph?

RALPH

That she will never scold with Ned, nor fight with me. Sirrah Harry, I have put her down with a thing impossible.

KING HENRY

What 's that, Ralph?

RALPH

Why, Harry, didst thou ever see that a woman could both hold her tongue and her hands? No: but when egg-pies grow on apple-trees, then will thy grey mare prove a bag-piper.

EMPEROR

What says the Lord of Castile and the Earl of Lincoln, that they are in such earnest and secret talk?

KING OF CASTILE

I stand, my lord, amazed at his talk,
How he discourseth of the constancy
Of one surnam'd, for beauty's excellence,
The Fair Maid of merry Fressingfield.

KING HENRY

'Tis true, my lord, 'tis wondrous for to hear;
Her beauty passing Mars's paramour,
Her virgin's right as rich as Vesta's was.
Lacy and Ned hath told me miracles.

KING OF CASTILE

What says Lord Lacy? Shall she be his wife?

LACY

Or else Lord Lacy is unfit to live.
[*To King Henry.*] May it please your highness give me leave
to post
To Fressingfield; I'll fetch the bonny girl,
And prove, in true appearance at the court,
What I have vouchèd often with my tongue.

KING HENRY

Lacy, go to the 'querry of my stable,
And take such coursers as shall fit thy turn.
Hie thee to Fressingfield, and bring home the lass;
And, for her fame flies through the English coast,
If it may please the lady Elinor,
One day shall match your excellence and her.

ELINOR

We Castile ladies are not very coy;
Your highness may command a greater boon,
And glad were I to grace the Lincoln Earl
With being partner of his marriage-day.

PRINCE EDWARD

Gramercy, Nell, for I do love the lord,
As he that 's second to thyself in love.

RALPH

You love her? Madam Nell, never believe him, though he
swears he loves you.

ELINOR

Why, Ralph?

RALPH [*sniggering*]

Why, his love is like unto a tapster's glass that is broken with every touch; for he loved the fair maid of Fressingfield once out of all ho—Nay, Ned, never wink upon me; I care not, I.

KING HENRY

Ralph tells all; you shall have a good secretary of him.
But, Lacy, haste thee post to Fressingfield;
For ere thou hast fitted all things for her state,
The solemn marriage-day will be at hand.

LACY

I go, my lord.

Lacy withdraws.

EMPEROR

How shall we pass this day, my lord?

KING HENRY

To horse, my lord; the day is passing fair,
We'll fly the partridge, or go rouse the deer.
Follow, my lords; you shall not want for sport.

SCENE XIII

*Friar Bacon sits brooding and disconsolate in his cell.
Friar Bungay comes in.*

BUNGAY

What means the friar that frolick'd it of late,
To sit as melancholy in his cell
As if he had neither lost nor won to-day?

BACON

Ah, Bungay, my Brazen Head is spoil'd,
My glory gone, my seven years' study lost!

The fame of Bacon, bruited through the world,
Shall end and perish with this deep disgrace.

BUNGAY

Bacon hath built foundation of his fame
So surely on the wings of true report,
With acting strange and uncouth miracles,
As this cannot infringe what he deserves.

BACON

Bungay, sit down, for by prospective skill
I find this day shall fall out ominous—
Some deadly act shall 'tide me ere I sleep;
But what and wherein little can I guess.

BUNGAY

My mind is heavy, whatsoe'er shall hap.
A knocking is heard: Bungay goes to the door and opens it.

BACON

Who 's that knocks?

BUNGAY

Two scholars that desire to speak with you.

BACON

Bid them come in.

Two scholars enter.

Now, my youths, what would you have?

FIRST SCHOLAR

Sir, we are Suffolk-men and neighbouring friends;
Our fathers in their countries lusty squires;
Their lands adjoin—in Cratfield mine doth dwell,
And his in Laxfield. We are college-mates,
Sworn brothers, as our fathers live as friends.

BACON

To what end is all this?

SECOND SCHOLAR

Hearing your worship kept within your cell
A glass prospective, wherein men might see
Whatso their thoughts or hearts' desire could wish,
We come to know how that our fathers fare.

BACON

My glass is free for every honest man.
Sit down, and you shall see ere long,
How, or in what state your friendly fathers live.
Meanwhile, tell me your names.

FIRST SCHOLAR

Mine Lambert?

SECOND SCHOLAR

And mine, Serslby.

BACON

Bungay, I smell there will be a tragedy.

*They sit and gaze into the glass. Soon appear the
figures of the elder Lambert and Serslby, each carrying
a rapier and dagger.*

LAMBERT

Serslby, thou hast kept thine hour like a man.
Thou'rt worthy of the title of a squire,
That durst, for proof of thy affection
And for thy mistress' favour, prize thy blood.
Thou know'st what words did pass at Fressingfield,
Such shameless braves as manhood cannot brook.
Ay, for I scorn to bear such piercing taunts,
Prepare thee, Serslby; one of us will die.

SERLSBY

Thou see'st I single meet thee in the field
And what I spake, I'll maintain with my sword.
Stand on thy guard, I cannot scold it out.
An if thou kill me, think I have a son,

That lives in Oxford in the Broadgates-hall,
Who will revenge his father's blood with blood.

LAMBERT

And, Serlsby, I have there a lusty boy,
That dares at weapon buckle with thy son,
And lives in Broadgates too, as well as thine.
But draw thy rapier, for we'll have a bout.

BACON

Now, lusty youngers, look within the glass,
And tell me if you can discern your sires.

FIRST SCHOLAR

Serlsby, 'tis hard; thy father offers wrong
To combat with my father in the field.

SECOND SCHOLAR

Lambert, thou liest, my father's is th' abuse,
And thou shalt find it, if my father harm.

BUNGAY

How goes it, sirs?

FIRST SCHOLAR

Our fathers are in combat hard by Fressingfield.

BACON

Sit still, my friends, and see the event.

LAMBERT

Why stand'st thou, Serlsby? Doubt'st thou of thy life?
A veney, man! fair Margaret craves so much.

SERLSBY

Then this for her.
They fight.

FIRST SCHOLAR

Ah, well thrust!

SECOND SCHOLAR

But mark the ward.

Lambert and Serlsby stab each other, and fall mortally wounded.

LAMBERT

O, I am slain!

SERLSBY

And, I—Lord have mercy on me!
They die.

FIRST SCHOLAR

My father slain! Serlsby, ward that.

SECOND SCHOLAR

And so is mine! Lambert, I'll quite thee well.
The scholars jump up with daggers drawn and kill each other.

BUNGAY

O strange stratagem!

BACON [*gazing horrified into the glass*]

See, friar, where the fathers both lie dead!
Bacon, thy magic doth effect this massacre.
This glass prospective worketh many woes;
And therefore seeing these brave lusty Brutes,
These friendly youths, did perish by thine art,
End all thy magic and thine art at once.
The poniard that did end their fatal lives,
Shall break the cause efficiat of their woes.
So fade the glass, and end with it the shows
That necromancy did infuse the crystal with.

He draws the poniard from Lambert's body and with it shatters the glass.

BUNGAY

What means learn'd Bacon thus to break his glass?

BACON [*overcome by his remorse*]

I tell thee, Bungay, it repents me sore
That ever Bacon meddled in this art.
The hours I have spent in pyromantic spells,
The fearful tossing in the latest night
Of papers full of necromantic charms,
Conjuring and abjuring devils and fiends,
With stole and alb and strange pentageron;
The wresting of the holy name of God,
As Sother, Eloim, and Adonai,
Alpha, Manoth, and Tetragrammaton;
With praying to the five-fold powers of heaven,
Are instances that Bacon must be damn'd
For using devils to countervail his God.
Yet, Bacon, cheer thee, drown not in despair;
Sins have their salves, repentance can do much.
Think Mercy sits where Justice holds her seat,
And from those wounds those bloody Jews did pierce,
Which by thy magic oft did bleed afresh,
From thence for thee the dew of mercy drops,
To wash the wrath of high Jehovah's ire,
And make thee as a new-born babe from sin.
Bungay, I'll spend the remnant of my life
In pure devotion, praying to my God
That He would save what Bacon vainly lost.

SCENE XIV

At Fressingfield, Margaret is about to enter the convent. She comes in wearing her nun's garb, followed by her father, the Keeper, and a friend.

KEEPER [*pleading*]

Margaret, be not so headstrong in these vows.
O, bury not such beauty in a cell,
That England hath held famous for the hue!
Thy father's hair, like to the silver blooms

That beautify the shrubs of Africa,
Shall fall before the dated time of death,
Thus to forgo his lovely Margaret.

MARGARET

Ah, father, when the harmony of heaven
Soundeth the measures of a lively faith,
The vain illusions of this flattering world
Seem odious to the thoughts of Margaret.
I lovèd once—Lord Lacy was my love;
And now I hate myself for that I lov'd,
And doted more on him than on my God—
For this I scourge myself with sharp repents.
But now the touch of such aspiring sins
Tells me all love is lust but love of heavens;
That beauty used for love is vanity.
The world contains naught but alluring baits,
Pride, flattery, and inconstant thoughts.
To shun the pricks of death, I leave the world,
And vow to meditate on heavenly bliss,
To live in Framlingham a holy nun,
Holy and pure in conscience and in deed;
And for to wish all maids to learn of me
To seek heaven's joy before earth's vanity.

FRIEND

And will you, then, Margaret, be shorn a nun, and so leave
us all?

MARGARET

Now farewell world, the engine of all woe!
Farewell to friends and father! Welcome Christ!
Adieu to dainty robes! This base attire
Better befits an humble mind to God
Than all the show of rich habiliments.
Farewell, O love! and, with fond love, farewell
Sweet Lacy, whom I lovèd once so dear!
Ever be well, but never in my thoughts,

Lest I offend to think on Lacy's love—

But even to that, as to the rest, farewell!

As she turns away from them, Lacy, Warren and Ermsby, booted and spurred, approach.

LACY

Come on, my wags, we're near the Keeper's lodge.

Here have I oft walk'd in the watery meads,

And chatted with my lovely Margaret.

WARREN

Sirrah Ned, is not this the Keeper?

LACY

'Tis the same.

ERMSBY

The old lecher hath gotten holy mutton to him—a nun, my lord.

LACY

Keeper, how far'st thou? Holla, man, what cheer?

How doth Peggy, thy daughter and my love?

KEEPER

Ah, good my lord! O, woe is me for Peggy!

See where she stands clad in her nun's attire,

Ready for to be shorn in Framlingham.

She leaves the world because she left your love.

O, good my lord, persuade her if you can!

LACY [*taking Margaret by the arm*]

Why, how now, Margaret! What, a malcontent?

A nun? What holy father taught you this,

To task yourself to such a tedious life

As die a maid? 'Twere injury to me,

To smother up such beauty in a cell.

MARGARET [*with eyes downcast*]

Lord Lacy, thinking of my former miss,

How fond the prime of wanton years were spent
In love (O, fie upon that fond conceit
Whose hap and essence hangeth in the eye!)
I leave both love and love's content at once,
Betaking me to Him that is true love,
And leaving all the world for love of Him.

LACY

Whence, Peggy, comes this metamorphosis?
What, shorn a nun, and I have from the court
Posted with coursers to convey thee hence
To Windsor, where our marriage shall be kept!
Thy wedding-robcs are in the tailor's hands.
Come, Peggy, leave these peremptory vows.

MARGARET

Did not my lord resign his interest,
And make divorce 'twixt Margaret and him?

LACY

'Twas but to try sweet Peggy's constancy.
But will fair Margaret leave her love and lord?

MARGARET [*her resolution weakening*]

Is not heaven's joy before earth's fading bliss,
And life above sweeter than life in love?

LACY [*in dismay*]

Why, then, Margaret, will be shorn a nun?

MARGARET

Margaret
Hath made a vow which may not be revok'd.

WARREN

We cannot stay, my lord; an if she be so strict,
Our leisure grants us not to woo afresh.

ERMSBY

Choose you, fair damsel, yet the choice is yours—
Either a solemn nunnery or the court,
God or Lord Lacy: which contents you best,
To be a nun or else Lord Lacy's wife?

LACY

A good motion. Peggy, your answer must be short.

MARGARET [*blushing*]

The flesh is frail. My lord doth know it well,
That when he comes with his enchanting face,
Whate'er betide, I cannot say him nay.
[*She throws off her nun's garb.*] Off goes the habit of a maiden's
heart,
And, seeing fortune will, fair Framlingham,
And all the show of holy nuns, farewell!
Lacy for me, if he will be my lord.

LACY [*taking her in his arms*]

Peggy, thy lord, thy love, thy husband.
Trust me, by truth of knighthood, that the king
Stays for to marry matchless Elinor,
Until I bring thee richly to the court,
That one day may both marry her and thee.
How say'st thou, Keeper? Art thou glad of this?

KEEPER

As if the English king had given
The park and deer of Fressingfield to me.

ERMSBY

I pray thee, my Lord of Sussex, why art thou in a brown
study?

WARREN

To see the nature of women; that be they never so near God,
yet they love to die in a man's arms.

LACY

What have you fit for breakfast? We have hied
And posted all this night to Fressingfield.

MARGARET

Butter and cheese, and umbles of a deer,
Such as poor keepers have within their lodge.

LACY

And not a bottle of wine?

MARGARET

We'll find one for my lord.

LACY

Come, Sussex, let us in—we shall have more,
For she speaks least, to hold her promise sure.

SCENE XV

A devil appears.

DEVIL [*peevishly*]

How restless are the ghosts of hellish sprites,
When every charmer with his magic spells
Calls us from nine-fold-trenchèd Phlegethon,
To scud and over-scour the earth in post
Upon the speedy wings of swiftest winds!
Now Bacon hath rais'd me from the darkest deep,
To search about the world for Miles his man,
For Miles, and to torment his lazy bones
For careless watching of his Brazen Head.
See where he comes: O, he is mine.

*He stands aside as Miles wanders in, wearing a
scholar's cap and gown.*

MILES

A scholar, quoth you! Marry, sir, I would I had been made a
bottle-maker when I was made a scholar; for I can get

neither to be a deacon, reader, nor schoolmaster, no, not the clerk of a parish. Some call me a dunce; another saith my head is as full of Latin as an egg's full of oatmeal—thus I am tormented, that the devil and Friar Bacon haunt me. [*Looking round.*] Good Lord, here's one of my master's devils! I'll go speak to him. [*With hand outstretched.*] What, Master Plutus, how cheer you?

DEVIL

Dost thou know me?

MILES

Know you, sir! Why, are not you one of my master's devils, that were wont to come to my master, Doctor Bacon, at Brazen-nose?

DEVIL

Yes, marry, am I.

MILES

Good Lord, Master Plutus, I have seen you a thousand times at my master's, and yet I had never the manners to make you drink. But, sir, I am glad to see how conformable you are to the statute. I warrant you, he's as yeomanly a man as you shall see; mark you, masters, here's a plain honest man, without welt or guard. But I pray you, sir, do you come lately from hell?

DEVIL

Ay, marry—how then?

MILES

Faith, 'tis a place I have desired long to see—have you not good tippling-houses there? May not a man have a lusty fire there, a pot of good ale, a pair of cards, a swinging piece of chalk, and a brown toast that will clap a white waistcoat on a cup of good drink?

DEVIL

All this you may have there.

MILES [*shaking the devil warmly by the band*]

You are for me, friend, and I am for you. But I pray you, may I not have an office there?

DEVIL

Yes, a thousand—what wouldst thou be?

MILES

By my troth, sir, in a place where I may profit myself. I know hell is a hot place, and men are marvellous dry, and much drink is spent there; I would be a tapster.

DEVIL

Thou shalt.

MILES

There's nothing lets me from going with you, but that 'tis a long journey, and I have never a horse.

DEVIL

Thou shalt ride on my back.

MILES

Now surely here's a courteous devil, that, for to pleasure his friend, will not stick to make a jade of himself. But I pray you, goodman friend, let me move a question to you.

DEVIL

What's that?

MILES

I pray you, whether is your pace a trot or an amble?

DEVIL

An amble.

MILES

'Tis well; but take heed it be not a trot—but 'tis no matter,
I'll prevent it.

He takes a pair of spurs out of his pocket and buckles them on.

DEVIL

What dost?

MILES

Marry, friend, I put on my spurs; for if I find your pace either
a trot or else uneasy, I'll put you to a false gallop; I'll make
you feel the benefit of my spurs.

DEVIL

Get up upon my back.

Miles mounts on the devil's back.

MILES

O Lord, here's even a goodly marvel, when a man rides to
hell on the devil's back!

He digs his spurs into his roaring steed, and rides off in triumph.

SCENE XVI

The weddings having been solemnized, there enter in procession the Emperor, with a pointless sword; the King of Castile, carrying a sword with a point; Lacy, bearing the globe; Warren, a rod of gold with a dove; Ermsby, the crown and sceptre; Prince Edward and Princess Elinor, attended by Margaret, now Countess of Lincoln; King Henry the Third; Friar Bacon in his vestments; and the lords and ladies attending.

PRINCE EDWARD [*coming forward and kneeling*]

Great potentates, earth's miracles for state,
Think that Prince Edward humbles at your feet,

And, for these favours, on his martial sword
He vows perpetual homage to yourselves,
Yielding these honours unto Elinor.

He rises.

KING HENRY

Gramercies, lordings; old Plantagenet,
That rules and sways the Albion diadem,
With tears discovers these conceived joys,
And vows requital, if his men/at/arms,
The wealth of England, or due honours done
To Elinor, may quite his favourites.
But all this while what say you to the dames
That shine like to the crystal lamps of heaven?

EMPEROR

If but a third were added to these two,
They did surpass those gorgeous images
That gloried Ida with rich beauty's wealth.

MARGARET [*kneeling*]

'Tis I, my lords, who humbly on my knee
Must yield her orisons to mighty Jove
For lifting up his handmaid to this state;
Brought from her homely cottage to the court,
And grac'd with kings, princes, and emperors,
To whom (next to the noble Lincoln Earl)
I vow obedience, and such humble love
As may a handmaid to such mighty men.

ELINOR [*raising her*]

Thou martial man that wears the Almain crown,
And you the western potentates of might,
The Albion princess, English Edward's wife,
Proud that the lovely star of Fressingfield,
Fair Margaret, Countess to the Lincoln Earl,
Attends on Elinor—gramercies, lord, for her—
'Tis I give thanks for Margaret to you all,
And rest for her due bounden to yourselves.

KING HENRY

Seeing the marriage is solemnizèd,
Let's march in triumph to the royal feast—
But why stands Friar Bacon here so mute?

BACON

Repentant for the follies of my youth,
That magic's secret mysteries misled,
And joyful that this royal marriage
Portends such bliss unto this matchless realm.

KING HENRY

Why, Bacon,
What strange event shall happen to this land?
Or what shall grow from Edward and his queen?

BACON

I find by deep prescience of mine art,
Which once I temper'd in my secret cell,
That here where Brute did build his Troynovant,
From forth the royal garden of a king
Shall flourish out so rich and fair a bud,
Whose brightness shall deface proud Phœbus' flower,
And over-shadow Albion with her leaves.
Till then Mars shall be master of the field,
But then the stormy threats of wars shall cease—
The horse shall stamp as careless of the pike,
Drums shall be turn'd to timbrels of delight;
With wealthy favours plenty shall enrich
The strand that gladdened wandering Brute to see,
And peace from heaven shall harbour in those leaves
That gorgeous beautify this matchless flower.
Apollo's heliotropion then shall stoop,
And Venus' hyacinth shall veil her top;
Juno shall shut her gilliflowers up,
And Pallas' bay shall 'bash her brightest green;
Ceres' carnation, in consort with those,
Shall stoop and wonder at Diana's rose.

KING HENRY

This prophecy is mystical.
But, glorious commanders of Europa's love,
That make fair England like that wealthy isle
Circled with Gihon and swift Euphrates,
In royalizing Henry's Albion
With presence of your princely mightiness—
Let 's march: the tables all are spread,
And viands, such as England's wealth affords,
Are ready set to furnish out the boards.
You shall have welcome, mighty potentates!
It rests to furnish up this royal feast,
Only your hearts be frolic; for time
Craves that we taste of naught but jouissance.
Thus glories England over all the west.

Omne tulit unctum qui miscuit utile dulci.

GLOSSARY

'A: he.

Aeromancy: divination by the wind.

Agenor's damsel: Europa carried off by Zeus to Crete.

Alate: lately.

Alcmena's bastard: Hercules.

Amorets: looks full of love.

Amort: dejected, as if dead.

An learn: if you teach.

Aphorisms: magic formulæ.

Apollo: the god who presided over the oracle at Delphi.

Augustus' kingly countermatch: i.e. Mark Antony.

Avoid: begone.

Barclay's ship: Alexander Barclay's *Shyp of Folyes*, 1509.

'*Bash*: abase, look down.

Battening: fattening.

Belcephon: a fiend.

Black-pots: large drinking-pots.

Bocardo: the north gate of Oxford, then used as a lock-up.

Braves: boasting.

Brook: endure.

Brown-bill: axe-headed spear.

Bruited: noised.

Brute: see Troynovant.

Candy: Ceylon.

Carvel: light trading galley.

Cates: delicacies.

Cheap: "good cheap," at a good price.

Choler: wrath.

Cleeves: cliffs.

Conceit: thought.

Conformable . . . to the statute: Miles's devil was plainly dressed, like a good yeoman who observed the statutes against extravagance.

Cope: purchase.

Copy: "by copy," rented by copyhold.

Cote: by the side of.

Counterfeit: portrait.

Countervail: overtake, prevail against.

Coursers: steeds.

Curious: of beautiful workmanship.

Damas': Damascus.

Dated: appointed.

Dint: stroke.

Domine Dawcock: a name taken from Skelton's verses. These lines are an imitation of Skelton's macaronic verse.

Doubtful: puzzling.

Egyptian courtesan: Cleopatra.

Efficiat: efficient, effecting.

Enfeoff: make over as absolute property.

Engine: instrument.

Eternize: eternalize.

Fabius Cummentator: the nearest Miles can get to Fabius Cunctator, who saved Rome from Hannibal by masterly inactivity.

Fairings: presents bought at the fair.

Fancy: love.

Fast-fancied: tied fast by love.

Fee: income, social status.

Fetch: trick.

Foil: defeat. "Take not now the foil," do not acknowledge defeat.

Fond: foolishly.

For: since.

For why: because.

Front: forehead.

Furniture: equipment.

'Gainst the spring: before spring comes.

Geomancy: divination and spells wrought by means of figures marked on the earth.

Gilliflowers: pinks.

Gin: begin.

Gramercies: many thanks.

Gree: agree, degree.

Grey: the colour of the shepherd's cloak.

Guess: guests.

Hæmeræ: flies that live but a day.

Heliotropion: heliotrope.

Hilding: a term of abuse, low creature.

Holds: holdings.

Hydromatic, hydromancy: divination by the spirits of streams.

Idea: image.

Imagery: beauty.

Jointer: sharer.

Jouissance: delight.

Lavolta: a quick Italian dance.

Lawnds: lawns.

Lets: hinders.

Lurden: lout.

Margarites: pearls.

Mark: 13s. 4d.

Mated: confused.

Mirabolans: dried plums.

Miscreant: unbeliever, villain.

Miss: fault.

Mutton: prostitute.

Once: for once.

Only: unique.

Orisons: prayers.

Out of all bo: out of all cry, excessively.

Packets: letters.

Paggle: quiver.

Pains: labour.

Pantofles: slippers.

Pass not: care not.

Passing: exceedingly.

Passion: suffering.

Pentageron, pentagon: a magic symbol which warded off spirits.

Peremptory: absolute.

Peripatetican: a wandering philosopher. Aristotle and his pupils discussed philosophy while walking round the portico.

Pioners: miners.

Pittance: allowance, rations.

Plackerd: pocket.

Plain out: explain.

Point of schools: argument in the schools.

Portace: a portable prayer-book.

Post: haste.

Prease: press, crush.

Prize: venture.

Promontory cleeves: jutting cliffs.

Punctum: a mere dot.

Pyromancy: divination by fire, wherein the shape and movement of the flames had special significance.

Quaint: delicate.

Quite: requite, pay for.

Ready: right.

Regent-house: the meeting-place of congregation.

Repair: visit.

Reparrel: apparel.

Resolve you: be assured.

Revel-dash: a rowdy game, a "rag."

Roisters: revellers.

Roves a bow beyond his reach: attempts things beyond his range.

Saint James': his day is 25th July.

Sethin: "shittim wood," satin wood.

Sewer: one who waits at table.

Sheat: lively.

Sith: since.

Skills: "what skills," what does it matter.

Squared: measured.

Stammel: red, a coarse red cloth

Stripp'd: outstripped.

Strouting: swelling.

Subsizer: poor scholar.

Suckets: sugar plums.

'Swones: by God's bones.

Table: tablet.

Taint: tint, hue.

Teasers: dogs.

Tell me: answer me.

Tempers: forges, produces.

Three-form'd Luna: the goddess Diana is three-formed—being Diana on earth, Luna in heaven, and Hecate in the underworld.

Timely: early.

'Tired: attired.

Toil: net.

Toys: trifles.

Treat: entreat.

Troop'd: escorted.

Troynovant: (new Troy), London, which was supposed to have been founded by Brutus, a descendant of Aeneas, one of the few survivors of Troy.

Tully: Cicero.

Umbles: inward parts.

Veney: fencing bout.

Wag: mischievous boy.

Welt, or guard: trimming or facing.

While: } until.

Whilst }

White son: darling.



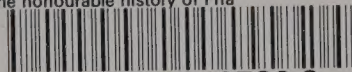
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